CHAPTER 11

Neighborhhoods and Towns
### Chapter 11. Neighborhoods and Towns

**Goal:**
Enhance neighborhoods in Winston-Salem and smaller municipalities through preservation, revitalization, quality infill development, and attractive neighborhood service areas. Focus higher-intensity, quality mixed-use development in activity centers, growth corridors, and town centers.

**Introduction**
Neighborhoods are where we live and raise our families. Their protection, preservation, and revitalization are therefore in the interest of everybody in the community. However, the idea of “protecting” a neighborhood—from development or redevelopment—varies greatly throughout our community. Some residents express concern over any nonresidential development near housing; others perceive increased residential densities or attached housing to be negative. Still others are more concerned with the design of development, historic preservation, or traffic problems. This chapter will explore these issues as well as strategies to accommodate 120,000 more people.

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<th>What the 2001 Legacy Plan says about Neighborhoods...</th>
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<td>Locate commercial areas in and near neighborhoods to serve as focal points and reduce automobile trips</td>
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<td>Include public spaces and amenities in the design of new and retrofitted neighborhoods</td>
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<td>Encourage a sense of community by incorporating features that enhance interaction</td>
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<td>Ensure neighborhoods are inclusive of all races, ages, and incomes</td>
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<td>Connect streets for a system of roads that disperses traffic instead of concentrating it on a few roads</td>
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<td>Revise street standards to address concerns about speeding and safety on residential streets</td>
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<td>Require sidewalks in standard subdivisions</td>
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<td>Ensure a variety of quality housing types for all income levels</td>
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<td>Continue public-private partnerships for the provision of affordable housing</td>
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<td>Allow accessory apartments with fewer restrictions on occupancy in urban areas</td>
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<td>Improve the quality of current public housing and disperse units throughout the community</td>
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<td>Foster a climate that is hospitable to affordable housing developments</td>
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<td>Develop successful town centers</td>
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<td>Encourage coordination between the planning boards of the different towns in the county</td>
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<td>Recognize local community plans and include them in countywide planning efforts</td>
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<td>Develop design guidelines for buildings, parking, sidewalks, and public spaces that are appropriate for small town centers</td>
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<td>Preserve the special character of each town</td>
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<td>Protect historic resources and the natural environment</td>
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The College Park development was funded by the Happy Hill Gardens HOPE VI grant.
The 2001 Legacy Plan promotes compact, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods that contain a mixture of land uses and offer a variety of transportation options. While some examples of this type of development have occurred locally, many neighborhoods in Winston-Salem, Forsyth County and its towns continue to be developed as low-density, auto-oriented subdivisions separated from personal services and shopping. While public and private investments have revitalized some residential and commercial areas and preserved historic resources around the county, work still needs to be done to create truly walkable, mixed-use and mixed-density neighborhoods and town centers.

This chapter discusses the problems, issues and development challenges in the areas beyond Winston-Salem’s Downtown but still in the serviceable land area, the part of the county that can be served by gravity sewer. It includes Growth Management Area (GMA) 2, Urban Neighborhoods; GMA 3, Suburban Neighborhoods; GMA 4, Future Growth Area; as well as Forsyth County’s towns (see Chapter 3, Growth Management, Map 3-2). The Growth Management Plan also includes activity centers and growth corridors. Activity centers are compact areas that have a mixture of uses and higher-density housing, are walkable and transit-oriented, and have a sense of place. Two types of growth corridors are recommended: primary growth corridors link activity centers to Downtown Winston-Salem while secondary growth corridors are major roadways linking activity centers to one another in suburban neighborhoods or towns.

**How Have the 2001 Legacy Plan Strategies Worked?**

The success of neighborhood improvement strategies since the adoption of Legacy is mixed. Suburban sprawl is still a major part of new development; however, major planning efforts and ordinance amendments are creating the necessary tools to design new neighborhoods and revitalize existing neighborhoods.

Infill ordinances have been adopted for both commercial and residential development in GMA 2, Urban Neighborhoods. New street standards include a sidewalk requirement for subdivisions within the serviceable land area of the city and county. New Planned Residential Development (PRD) Standards, a tree ordinance for the City, and a Demolition by Neglect Ordinance (for protection of declining historical residential structures) were
adopted. The Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District (NCO) is a tool developed recently to protect the existing character of older neighborhoods. A neighborhood can apply for an NCO by doing research and documenting the features of the neighborhood they want to protect. Two neighborhoods, Country Club Estates and Mallard Lakes, adopted conservation standards for the preservation of their existing neighborhood character.

For the first time, area plans are complete for the entire county except the Rural Area. Two distressed public housing projects, Kimberly Park Terrace and Happy Hill Gardens, have been converted into mixed-income and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HOPE VI Program. In addition, the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem is channeling efforts to create vibrant mixed-use and mixed-income neighborhoods in the area covered by the Cleveland Avenue Initiative Master Plan.

A number of National Register Districts have been created since the adoption of Legacy to protect the county’s cultural, historical, and architectural resources, including Ardmore, Centerville, Holly Avenue, Reynoldstown, Sunnyside/Central Terrace, Waughtown/Bellview, and West Salem.

Various programs providing financial assistance to businesses and individuals are offered by the City of Winston-Salem in the designated Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (Map 11-1). One of the most recent programs is the Revitalizing Urban Commercial Areas (RUCA) Program. Phase I of the RUCA Program funded improvements that included Waughtown Street/Thomasville Road, Liberty Street and Washington Park/Acadia Street. Phase II of the RUCA Program has allocated funds for the revitalization of additional commercial areas.

The City of Winston-Salem has also created the Office of Community Assistance with six neighborhood specialists to make it easier for citizens to interact with City government. Several City departments have been combined in an effort to centralize programs that provide neighborhood assistance.

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) have been created by community leaders to promote and support community development. Both the Neighborhood Alliance and Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods remain strong and active organizations.

Revitalization efforts have also been accomplished in a number of urban neighborhoods through redevelopment, residential and commercial infill, and targeted rehabilitation of residential areas and structures. Some older neighborhoods have been retrofitted with sidewalks and bike lanes.

While much new development has continued the pattern of large-lot subdivisions, some have been designed as pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with a mixture of residential and commercial buildings, including Hillcrest, Northern Quarters, Brookberry Farm, Harper Hill Commons, Shoppes at Little Creek, Vernon Farms and Robinhood Village. However, many of these large developments have not yet been completely built and the tendency has been to do either the residential or the commercial components first. These developments will not function as originally intended until all of the approved land uses are completed.

Small towns, including Kernersville, Lewisville, Clemmons, Walkertown, Tobaccoville and Rural Hall, have developed/updated comprehensive plans to guide future development in their communities. These are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

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**Legacy Themes Advanced in Policies and Action Agenda Recommendations**

- Fiscal Responsibility
- Livable Design
- Sustainable Growth

*LEGACY 2030*
Objectives, Policies, and Action Agenda

Objective 1:
Urban Neighborhoods – Complete Neighborhoods
Create complete neighborhoods that have a mix of housing types and land uses, include affordable housing and transportation options, and are in close proximity to schools, retail, employment, community services, parks, and recreation.

Changes in demographics and housing choices are making urban living popular again. Married couples with children no longer represent the majority of households in Forsyth County. Increasingly, smaller household sizes, baby-boomers that have become empty nesters, and urban lifestyles favored by young professionals have brought an increasing demand for higher-density housing near an urban core instead of traditional suburban living. Although predominantly single-family, Winston-Salem’s urban neighborhoods provide some diverse housing options with medium to high densities as well as mixed-use areas. Many of these neighborhoods have a diverse population and generally have medium to high rates of ownership, although many people are choosing to rent even when they can afford to buy.

Affordable housing opportunities are offered throughout the Urban Neighborhoods. There are more transportation choices in the Urban Neighborhoods with street, public transit, and bicycle and pedestrian systems in place. Another issue for Urban Neighborhoods is our aging population. There are few facilities for the elderly within the Urban Neighborhood boundary, though citizens throughout the county have expressed an interest in aging in place.

For more information on complete neighborhoods, see Chapter 8, Healthy, Complete and Equitable Communities.

Policies

- **Mix of Housing Types** Encourage the production of a range of housing types in neighborhoods for the elderly and people with disabilities, including independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing care facilities.

- **Revitalize Distressed Areas** Revitalize or redevelop distressed areas with a mix of housing types and services in well-designed, walkable communities to attract new residents and to allow the elderly to continue to live in the same community as their housing needs change.

- **Mixed-Income Housing** Promote the development of mixed-income housing that may include a mix of housing types.

- **Neighborhood Commercial Areas** Promote existing neighborhood commercial areas that are accessible and convenient to all residents.

- **Affordable Housing** Encourage affordable housing throughout the community.

The Gateway Commons development was funded by the Kimberly Park Terrace HOPE VI grant.
Action Agenda

11.1.1. Good Sites for Elderly Housing
Designate sites well suited for elderly housing through the area plan process.

11.1.2. Connectivity Improvements
Review and recommend improvements for the connectivity of housing to services and institutional uses through the area plan process.

11.1.3. Enhance Services
Make recommendations to protect and enhance urban schools, parks, institutional uses, and other services through the area plan process.

11.1.4. Affordable Housing
Consider ways to include affordable housing in larger-scale developments.

Objective 2: Urban Neighborhoods – Preservation, Revitalization, and Adaptive Reuse
Preserve and strengthen neighborhoods by maintaining and revitalizing existing homes, nonresidential structures, and infrastructure that contribute to neighborhood character and function.

The quality of the built environment is fundamental to the health of the Urban Neighborhoods. The existing building stock, both residential and nonresidential, continues to age but can still be used to meet some of the demand for future housing and commercial development. However, building code compliance for deteriorated and abandoned buildings can make these structures hard to rehabilitate. In the past, urban renewal programs demolished neighborhoods due to blight or for City-initiated development projects such as new highways. These past examples, fear of change, and a perception that change will bring negative consequences to a community can pose a challenge for future redevelopment.

Many Urban Neighborhood areas have maintained or enhanced their original housing stock through a number of public revitalization strategies or through private efforts. However, other older neighborhoods have experienced worsening housing conditions from neglect of property maintenance, disinvestment, and crime. The City uses code enforcement to require property owners to maintain their properties, but also provides financial assistance programs to help eligible property owners rehabilitate their homes. There are a number of programs for housing rehabilitation in Winston-Salem, and many are focused in the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (Map 11-1). These include the Citywide Mortgage Program for owner-occupants, the Emergency Repair Program, the Purchase/Tandem Loan Program, the Lead Safe Program and the Section 3 Construction Training Program. Operation Impact is a comprehensive code enforcement program aimed at entire neighborhoods that has been recently revised in response to citizen input.

The decline in some neighborhoods is not just reflected by changes in housing conditions, but also by issues with public infrastructure. In some areas, sidewalks are in poor condition or lacking altogether. In many busy areas, pedestrian crossings are not provided. This lack of pedestrian connectivity and safety features can create problems for people trying to reach services and retail uses, especially for those without personal vehicles. Many of our older parks also have aging and outdated infrastructure, resulting in disuse and negative perceptions.
There are a number of tools to preserve older neighborhoods and homes. Neighborhoods listed on the National Register of Historic Places have tax advantages if rehabilitation is done according to specified standards. However, federal programs for housing rehabilitation that are often used in low-income neighborhoods must also follow these standards when they are used in National Register Districts. Some believe it puts an undue financial burden on property owners there. The two local historic districts in the Urban Neighborhoods, Old Salem and West End, have design guidelines that must be followed when making exterior changes to a property.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Revitalize Existing Neighborhoods</strong> Support the maintenance, revitalization, and rehabilitation of existing housing stock contributing to neighborhood character.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Historic Designation</strong> Encourage historic designations that help to preserve residential and nonresidential structures where appropriate (see Chapter 9, Community Character).</td>
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<td><strong>Adaptive Reuse</strong> Make adaptive reuse a preferred strategy for historic structures and sites rather than demolition.</td>
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<td><strong>Maintain Public Infrastructure</strong> Support neighborhood integrity through the maintenance of public infrastructure.</td>
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<td><strong>Investment in Older Neighborhoods</strong> Support the work of Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and the Winston-Salem Housing Authority to provide investment in older neighborhoods.</td>
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<td><strong>Neighborhood Disinvestment</strong> Encourage public and private actions to improve the physical environment of neighborhoods experiencing disinvestment.</td>
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<td><strong>Revitalization</strong> Encourage the revitalization of institutional and commercial uses that are integral parts of neighborhoods.</td>
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**Nonresidential Reuse** Encourage the adaptive reuse of older nonresidential buildings for residential use where appropriate.

**Transitions and Buffers** Ensure appropriate transitional land uses or physical buffering between residential and nonresidential uses to maintain the character and stability of neighborhoods. Quality design of nonresidential uses may negate the need for buffers (see Chapter 4, Land Use).

**Neighborhood Stability** Reinforce neighborhood stability by encouraging more homeownership and a sense of neighborhood identity.

Reynolda Road has several auto service stations being adaptively reused.
**Action Agenda**

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<th>11.2.1. Code Enforcement</th>
<th>Continue code enforcement to maintain and preserve existing housing stock.</th>
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<td>11.2.2. Substandard Conditions</td>
<td>Continue to refine strategies to effectively focus on areas and types of housing where substandard conditions are more concentrated.</td>
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<td>11.2.3. Financial Assistance for Housing Rehab</td>
<td>Continue to use federal and local funding to provide financial assistance for housing rehabilitation when monies are available.</td>
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<td>11.2.4. Historic Designation</td>
<td>In qualifying areas, use historic designations to protect neighborhoods through regulation or other incentives such as tax credits (see Chapter 9, Community Character).</td>
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<td>11.2.5. Building Rehab Incentives</td>
<td>Consider creating incentives for the rehabilitation or reuse of existing buildings.</td>
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<td>11.2.6. Needs of Declining Neighborhoods</td>
<td>Continue to work with other departments to improve public infrastructure in declining neighborhoods and identify these needs in the area plan process.</td>
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<td>11.2.7. Rehabilitation Database</td>
<td>Explore creating a database of sound existing structures that can be rehabilitated or reused.</td>
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<td>11.2.8. Adaptive Reuse Candidates</td>
<td>Identify large buildings for adaptive reuse through the area plan process.</td>
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<td>11.2.9. Adaptive Reuse Codes</td>
<td>Assist developers who are rehabilitating and adaptively reusing older buildings by making building code interpretation and administration for those types of buildings as user-friendly, efficient, and consistent as possible.</td>
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**Objective 3: Urban Neighborhoods – Infill**

Encourage quality infill development on both vacant land and redeveloped sites with an emphasis on conforming to the neighborhood’s existing character and scale. Utilize the concept of gentle density to increase the overall density of Urban Neighborhoods and provide a wide variety of housing options.

Infill development can provide housing, decrease sprawl, and keep the urban area more viable. Increased density in designated infill areas can be developed in an attractive manner and provide housing choices for a large number of newcomers. The cost of providing public services to new residential development is reduced when developed at higher densities anywhere infrastructure is already available. Urban infill and redevelopment has changed the existing character of some areas and has been met with different levels of acceptance by surrounding residents. Urban area plans completed over the past ten years identify residential infill opportunity sites for vacant parcels. Both large and small infill lots may have challenges, such as slopes or drainage, that could benefit from an overall strategy for their development. Basic design standards can also ensure compatible development with existing neighborhoods.

The question of increased densities for infill sites remains an emotional issue for many neighborhoods. Higher densities are often perceived to have bad design, increase traffic, decrease property values, and increase crime; however, Forsyth County has many examples of attractive urban, higher-density, high-quality housing stock. In fact, some of the most expensive housing under construction in Forsyth County is classified...
as moderate density. Gentle density, a way to increase overall density by allowing residential accessory structures such as carriage houses and granny flats, is being used by many cities to revitalize urban neighborhoods and combat sprawl. Such a strategy employed throughout Winston-Salem’s Urban Neighborhoods could create a significant number of new homes and, if implemented carefully, would not burden any one neighborhood.

Citizens attending the Legacy 2030 kick-off estimated that 30,000 people of the projected 120,000 population increase might be attracted to live in Downtown Winston-Salem and the Center City. At a projected 1.9 person per household, this would be approximately 15,800 housing units. Under current area plan recommendations, in all of the Urban Neighborhoods outside of Downtown Winston-Salem, only 324 acres are designated for densities higher than single-family residential. Combined with recommendations for single-family residential, this would accommodate 4,495 housing units or an additional 8,540 people in GMA 2.

### Policies

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<th><strong>Quality Infill Design</strong></th>
<th>Promote standards requiring high-quality design for infill development that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gentle Density</strong></td>
<td>Promote the concept of gentle density in existing neighborhoods.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minimal Impact</strong></td>
<td>Ensure the design and placement of gentle density buildings respect neighborhood identity and sense of place and have minimal impact on the streetscapes of single-family residential areas.</td>
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<td><strong>Infill Benefits</strong></td>
<td>Increase public awareness of infill development in containing urban sprawl and reducing the cost of future infrastructure and tax rates.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Affordable Infill Housing</strong></td>
<td>Encourage the construction of affordable infill housing through public, nonprofit, and private sector efforts.</td>
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### Action Agenda

11.3.1. **Design Standards** Develop basic design standards or an infill guide that includes landscaping, building placement, and materials for small-lot, townhouse and multifamily residential development to ensure compatibility of diverse housing types.

11.3.2. **Good Design** Increase awareness of what constitutes good multifamily, townhouse, duplex, triplex, and quadraplex residential designs.

11.3.3. **Gentle Density Examples** Provide materials to the public showing examples of gentle density and discussing the fiscal advantages of increased densities.

Action Agenda continued on next page
### Action Agenda

**11.3.4. Local Examples** Identify high-quality, local higher-density developments and promote them as positive examples.

**11.3.5. Identified Infill Locations** Work with residents of identified locations to articulate a vision of the type of infill that will strengthen the neighborhood. Allow these projects to move quickly through the regulatory process.

**11.3.6. Desirable Density** Conduct visual preference surveys, public workshops, and design charrettes to help citizens see that increasing densities can be desirable.

**11.3.7. Targeted Infill Opportunities** Identify locations within the Urban Neighborhoods for targeted infill development and compatible redevelopment opportunities through the area plan process.

**11.3.8. Development Codes** Consider changes to existing codes to better accommodate infill development in older neighborhoods. Explore easing standards for pre-existing lots, reducing off-street parking standards, reducing front setbacks, or using performance standards to focus on controlling the impacts of development.

**11.3.9. Granny Flats** Allow detached accessory units or granny flats under designated zoning districts in Growth Management Areas 2 and 3.

**11.3.10. Detached Accessory Unit Guide** Develop a guide that addresses land use regulations, site planning, and good design features for detached accessory units.

**11.3.11. Infill Demonstration Project** Gain community acceptance for infill development by doing a demonstration project.

**11.3.12. Gentle Density Design Competition** Organize a design competition to spur creation of reasonably priced plans for gentle density projects.

**11.3.13. Develop Public Gathering Places** Attract infill development with the development of public gathering places strategically located and designed in individual neighborhoods.

**11.3.14. Barriers to Infill Development** Address barriers, such as inadequate infrastructure, difficult parcel assembly, permit processes, security concerns, or other barriers that may have prevented the development of vacant parcels.

**11.3.15. Infrastructure Investments** Identify capital infrastructure investments to facilitate infill and reuse.

**11.3.16. Funding Mechanisms** Explore financial and funding mechanisms for reuse and infill development.

**11.3.17. Public-Private Partnerships** Create public-private partnerships to encourage reuse and infill.

### Objective 4: Urban Neighborhoods – Commercial Areas

**Revitalize older commercial areas as an essential component of urban neighborhoods.**

Older commercial areas are vital to the health of surrounding residential areas throughout Winston-Salem’s Urban Neighborhoods. As with housing, aging commercial areas and structures have numerous problems due to age and decline. Some older commercial nodes scattered throughout older neighborhoods no longer offer basic day-to-day services and retail for local residents. Many mom and pop businesses have been replaced by big box...
stores and large grocery chains that are less conveniently located. Other urban shopping areas, such as Thruway, have been maintained and are doing well, even in a slow economy. The most intensive future commercial and residential uses are recommended for activity centers and primary growth corridors (see Chapter 3, Growth Management, Map 3-2).

The City has a number of programs aimed at improving these older commercial areas including loan funds, building rehabilitation programs, and business assistance programs. Like the housing rehab programs, many of these are focused in the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (Map 11-1). Many smaller, older commercial areas are unsightly due to the lack of appearance requirements that existed when they were constructed. Older areas are lacking streetyards (landscaping between streets and parking lots), buffering (vegetation or fencing) to block the view of businesses from adjacent houses, landscaping within parking lots, screening of grease traps and dumpsters, updated facades, striping of parking lots, and modern signage. To better combat the poor appearance and physical decline in older commercial areas, the City created the Revitalizing Urban Commercial Areas (RUCA) program within GMA 2. The City also now has the authority to condemn and demolish nonresidential buildings that are vacant, dilapidated, and dangerous.

Washington Perk is the end result of a successful RUCA project on Acadia Avenue.

### Action Agenda

11.4.1. **New Commercial Rezoning** Consider the impact on older commercial areas when evaluating proposals for new commercial rezoning.

11.4.2. **Critical Businesses** Develop a strategy to attract critical businesses and services back to inner city neighborhoods and to improve existing ones.

11.4.3. **Effective City Codes** Evaluate the progress and effectiveness of City codes in dealing with the rehab or removal of vacant, dangerous, and dilapidated nonresidential buildings.

11.4.4. **Revitalizing Urban Commercial Areas Program** Continue and expand the Revitalizing Urban Commercial Areas (RUCA) program in GMA 2. Focus on visible physical improvements to buildings, sites, and public infrastructure.

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**Policies**

- **Older Commercial Areas** Support older commercial areas in their efforts to stay competitive so that they can provide basic services to surrounding neighborhoods.

- **Neighborhood Services** Promote new, convenient, commercial and business services to support neighborhood needs.

- **Community Reinvestment** Establish or expand public and private community reinvestment programs to sustain the economic vitality and quality of life in older commercial areas and adjacent neighborhoods.

- **Commercial Area Revitalization** Develop streetscape and infrastructure improvement programs for identified older commercial areas in need of revitalization.
11.4.5. Additional Revitalization Programs
Develop additional programs for commercial revitalization.

11.4.6. Public Improvement Projects
Continue commercial revitalization funding for public improvement projects in specific areas, and other means of providing incentives to owners for property improvements.

Objective 5: Suburban Neighborhoods – Livable and Sustainable Neighborhoods
Create new and enhance existing neighborhoods, emphasizing connectivity, walkability, a variety of land uses, and access to services and institutional uses. Direct the most intense mixed-use development to designated activity centers.

Transforming residential subdivisions into a more sustainable development pattern is difficult since they were not designed or built for flexibility. Some options for adapting existing subdivisions for improved livability include: creating a network of connecting streets, adding parks and open space, constructing sidewalks, retrofitting wide roads with bike lanes, and assuring that needed services are located nearby. These changes will allow residents to use multiple modes of transportation and not rely exclusively on the automobile. An additional way of creating better connectivity for bicycles and pedestrians in suburban areas is to continue to build a system of greenways that link both existing and new subdivision developments.

The area plan program has identified sites for higher densities in the Suburban Neighborhoods to provide diverse types of housing and better use of existing infrastructure. Sites recommended for higher densities are typically along major roads where they will have access to current or future transit and are located near existing or future commercial areas. As with the Urban Neighborhoods, proposed higher-density residential developments are sometimes opposed by residents of nearby single-family residential areas. Mixed-use developments are recommended in activity centers.

Policies

Existing Infrastructure
Encourage development in areas with existing infrastructure before extending infrastructure farther.

Pedestrian- and Bike-Friendly
Make existing and new suburban neighborhoods pedestrian- and bike-friendly by developing interconnected street networks that include sidewalks and bike lanes.

Open Space, Parks, Greenways
Encourage the development of open spaces, parks and greenways that link existing and new subdivisions (see Chapter 8, Healthy, Complete, and Equitable Communities).

Activity Center Development
Encourage more intense mixed-use development to locate in activity centers and be connected to residential areas.
11.5.1. Diverse Housing Types Ensure diversity of housing types by identifying sites for higher density residential uses in area plans.

11.5.2. Development Regulations Investigate changes to development regulations to more easily enable the creation of more land-efficient subdivisions and developments accommodating a variety of housing types and land uses.

11.5.3. Increased Connectivity Increase connectivity by linking existing and proposed streets to form a network that provides multiple routes for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers (see Chapter 5, Transportation).

11.5.4. Contiguous Neighborhoods Study ways to connect contiguous neighborhoods to one another and revise subdivision requirements as necessary.

11.5.5. Design Templates Develop and encourage the use of design templates illustrating neighborhoods containing gateways, gathering places, open spaces, and in some cases, services for neighborhood residents.

11.5.6. Residential Infill Ordinance Consider expanding the Residential Infill Development Ordinance into GMA 3.

Objective 6: Suburban Neighborhoods – Aging Shopping Centers
Rediscover centers into compact, mixed-use centers or incrementally adapt older centers into a different form of shopping environment with pedestrian features, high-quality public spaces, and other amenities.

A trend in some older suburban areas is the decline of older shopping centers. Like some inner-city commercial areas, many of these centers were built before some of the appearance-related requirements were put in place.

Large parking areas are void of any plantings, façades have become outdated, and there is no screening for utilities or nearby homes. The term, greyfields, is being applied to abandoned retail developments as newer, better designed shopping centers with more amenities have caused vacancies in some of these older locations.

In some cities, old shopping centers are being converted to other uses, such as large-scale churches or schools. In Winston-Salem, an older big box store on University Parkway was converted into a new movie theater. As in the Urban Neighborhoods, older shopping centers and strip malls can be revitalized and retrofitted into compact, mixed-use centers. Defining the appropriate scale and intensity that fits in with the surrounding development is very important.
Policies

Compatible Shopping and Services  Promote the development of integrated, self-contained shopping and service centers designed to be compatible with and accessible to adjacent residential areas.

Redevelopment of Declining Shopping Centers  Encourage redevelopment of declining older shopping centers to contain a mixture of uses including residential for larger sites.

Pedestrian-Friendly  Promote a pedestrian-friendly orientation for new development and redevelopment and reduce the visual dominance of parking areas.

Urban Village Shopping Centers  Encourage incremental transformation of existing shopping centers to an urban village or Main Street form.

Action Agenda

11.6.1. Design Templates  Create design templates that show a change from the current typical shopping center layout with isolated buildings surrounded by parking lots into blocks with buildings facing along connecting walkways and public gathering places.

11.6.2. Illustrations  Create design illustrations for both the architecture of the building and the site development as examples of desired development intent.

11.6.3. Desired Design Features  Identify design techniques for street frontage, corner treatment and site amenities to ensure desired character.

11.6.4. Building Orientation  Consider requiring new buildings to be oriented to both public and internal streets and parking areas located internally on the site or behind buildings.

11.6.5. Streets in Redeveloped Shopping Centers  Require a system of interconnected streets for new and redeveloped centers and a Main Street character lined with retail shops or offices.

11.6.6. Bicycle and Pedestrian Links  Strengthen bicycle and pedestrian links to surrounding residential areas.

11.6.7. Ground-Floor Retail  Maintain storefront retail uses on the ground floor of multistory buildings in shopping areas for pedestrian orientation and vitality.

A commercial building rehabilitation in the Ogburn Station area.
Objective 7: Activity Centers
Retrofit, redevelop, or develop identified urban and suburban activity centers to create mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly areas providing easy access to a range of goods and services as well as provide locations for higher-density residential development.

Activity centers are mixed-use areas developed in a more urban, compact, pedestrian-friendly manner. By concentrating these uses in designated areas, we can increase residential density where infrastructure already exists thereby reducing suburban sprawl while providing services and shopping convenient to neighborhoods.

Most activity centers shown on the Legacy 2030 Growth Management Plan (Chapter 3, Growth Management, Map 3-2) already exist as areas that include commercial development. Some activity centers, such as the urban East Winston and West Salem Activity Centers, as well as the suburban Walkertown/US 158 Activity Center, are already mixed-use developments but need to be retrofitted in terms of walkability, design, or connectivity.

Retrofitting and redevelopment will be necessary to accommodate an urban form and to establish connections to surrounding neighborhoods. Other activity centers, such as the urban Waughtown Street/High Point Road Activity Center and the suburban I-40/Union Cross Road Activity Center, need well designed, higher density residential developed within or adjacent to them. One good local example of redevelopment of an older shopping area to a more urban form is the Thruway Shopping Center. New shops were added along Stratford Road in what was formerly the parking lot. The new construction created a courtyard effect internally, and the new buildings give a more pleasing view from Stratford Road than the previous surface parking lot. The town centers of Forsyth County’s smaller municipalities are also considered activity centers. It is important that a healthy mixture of uses continues to be focused in small towns, particularly in or near their town centers. As more people live in or near activity centers, both automobile trips and traffic congestion can be reduced.

Good mixed-use design for activity center development or redevelopment ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places. Mixed-use developments need to be compatible with adjacent land uses, provide a diversity of housing types, contribute to the character of the neighborhood and larger community, and create vibrant, pedestrian-oriented places. Special attention needs to be given to producing an acceptable mix of land uses; designing parking areas for walkability; providing circulation patterns for vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access; and providing public amenities, including plazas and open space. Energy-efficient, sustainable development should be highly encouraged in activity centers.

Robinhood Village Activity Center.

Policies

Compact and Mixed-Use Promote activity centers as compact, mixed-use areas supporting walking and transit use and providing services and employment close to residences.

Support Concentrations of Activity Maintain and enhance retail commercial services throughout the city, especially in areas attractive to pedestrian and transit riders, to support concentrations of residential and employment activity.

Policies continued on next page
### Policies

**Community Gathering Places** Develop accessible community gathering places within activity centers that include spaces such as plazas, parks and farmers markets that encourage interaction and provide places for people to visit and relax.

**Horizontal and Vertical Mixed-Use** Promote both horizontal and vertical mixed-use within designated activity centers.

**Compatibility with Surrounding Neighborhoods** Ensure activity centers’ compatibility with the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Balance Needs** Balance the needs of residential uses for privacy and security with commercial use requirements within activity centers, including access, visibility, parking, loading, and extended hours of operation.

### Action Agenda

**11.7.1. Main Street Character** In activity centers and mixed-use development, establish continuous building street frontages and reduced setbacks to frame and enclose a Main Street character for pedestrians.

**11.7.2. Greater Mixture of Uses** Through zoning actions, allow and encourage a greater mixture of uses, including office, retail, a variety of housing types, civic and institutional uses, and urban open spaces, such as squares or plazas.

**11.7.3. Minimize Vehicle and Pedestrian Conflicts** Provide for both vehicular and pedestrian circulation with the goal of minimizing conflicts and maximizing convenience.

**11.7.4. Vehicle Parking** Minimize the visual prominence of parked vehicles to create more aesthetically appealing sites and to increase storefront or office visibility.

**11.7.5. Evaluate Through Area Plan Process** Evaluate identified activity centers for mixed-use development potential and neighborhood accessibility through the area plan process.

**11.7.6. Site Amenities** Consider requiring site amenities, such as public plazas, squares, outdoor seating areas or sidewalk cafes, and pedestrian-scale features, such as street furniture, clock towers or water features, which offer spaces for social interaction and create a pedestrian-friendly development.

**11.7.7. Design Standards** Develop design standards to create variety-rich, mixed-use projects.

**11.7.8. Better Transitions** Develop regulations that create a better and context-specific transition between more intense mixed-use development and adjacent established neighborhoods.

**11.7.9. Commercial Redevelopment Guidebook** Develop a guidebook for potential commercial redevelopment that includes building placement and design, parking, visibility, connections and mixed uses.

**11.7.10. Incentives for Retrofitting** Explore a range of incentives, both regulatory (density bonuses, allowing a more intense zoning district, and fast permitting) and financial, to make retrofitting faster and economically feasible.
Objective 8: Growth Corridors
Better utilize development resources along corridors, particularly when revitalizing older, automobile-oriented strip commercial areas experiencing decline. This may be done by increasing residential densities, adding mixed-use development, improving design and appearance, and providing better transportation options.

In addition to activity centers, the Growth Management Plan in Chapter 3 discusses the concept of primary corridors (see Chapter 3, Growth Management, Map 3-2) and secondary corridors. Primary corridors link Downtown Winston-Salem with activity centers and are generally located along major arterial roads. Secondary corridors are major roadways or portions of roadways that link activity centers in the Suburban Neighborhoods and in some cases link smaller municipalities to one another.

The older, automobile-oriented, strip-commercial areas found along main corridors, such as Peters Creek Parkway, University Parkway, N. Liberty Street, or Stratford Road, have experienced decline as retail uses relocated to newer centers farther out. However, these declining strips present an opportunity for increased residential density and mixed-use development. This increased density along primary corridors is critical in establishing a well-used public transit system and accommodating more residents, including seniors and those citizens needing affordable housing. Primary corridors are intended to function as the main future multimodal transportation arterials in Forsyth County, and most activity centers are located here as well. Secondary corridors will be identified in the area plan process. Select locations along these corridors could have higher-density housing and may become transit corridors.

Columbia Pike in Arlington, VA demonstrates how a growth corridor could develop in Forsyth County.
### Policies

**Growth Corridor Land Uses** Ensure an integrated and comprehensive approach to improve the function, safety, appearance and land uses along primary growth corridors.

**Land-Use Controls** Promote growth corridor plans that have special land-use controls to protect surrounding neighborhoods and prevent strip commercial development.

**Design Standards** Establish higher standards for site planning and design within growth corridor areas.

### Action Agenda

1. **11.8.1. Redevelopment Locations** Identify potential locations for redevelopment along growth corridors for transit-oriented, high-density, mixed-use nodes through the area plan program.

2. **11.8.2. Secondary Corridors** Identify secondary growth corridors as part of the area plan process.

3. **11.8.3. Corridor Design** Determine the appropriate corridor design for pedestrian improvements and street furnishings for different types of corridors.

4. **11.8.4. Corridor Master Plans** Develop growth corridor master plans that tailor improvements for individual stretches of the roadway to the unique character of each corridor.

5. **11.8.5. Compatibility** Ensure compatibility with adjacent residential areas as growth corridor plans are prepared.

6. **11.8.6. Commercial and Residential Transitions** Blend commercial and residential uses in a manner that creates compatible transitions between higher-density developments and surrounding single-family residential areas.

7. **11.8.7. Overlay Zoning** Explore the use of corridor zoning districts or overlay zoning provisions to ensure adherence to good site planning principles, sensitive design, and to promote continuity in the design of corridors.

8. **11.8.8. Access Management Measures** Explore the need for access management measures in all growth corridor plans.

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University Parkway is one growth corridor that presents an opportunity for more dense development.
Objective 9: Forsyth County Towns
Retain and preserve the unique town character present in the different communities in Forsyth County with an emphasis on creating active and livable town centers that reflect each town’s rich heritage.

Outside of Winston-Salem, Forsyth County’s smaller municipalities are dealing with the same issues occurring with old and new housing and commercial areas. Perhaps the biggest challenge is the continuing viability of the town centers. Kernersville, Walkertown, and Rural Hall have undertaken or are looking at strategies for revitalizing their existing town centers while Lewisville, Bethania, and Tobaccoville are in the process of creating town centers. Clemmons, through their Community Compass Plan, is actually moving their town center to a new, mixed-use development area. The small towns of Forsyth County each have their own more detailed visions, plans and strategies for implementing the 2001 Legacy Plan.

Bethania

Founded in 1759 by the Moravian Brethren of Wachovia, Bethania is the oldest municipality in Forsyth County. The first planned Moravian settlement in North Carolina, Bethania is one of the only examples in the United States of a German medieval-plan farming village. The town was laid out in this German agricultural pattern by the surveyor Christian Gottlieb Reuter. The Moravian Church owned the land and families lived on 24 town lots that flanked a main street running north and south of a central square. Each family was assigned equal bottom-land strip fields and upland orchard lots. The 500-acre Bethania National Historic Landmark District is the largest National Landmark in Forsyth County. Bethania and its 18th- and 19th-century properties are listed on the National and North Carolina State Historic Registers of Places.

Bethania was incorporated in 1995. Today, the original village design remains visible and intact, and most town lots and roadways have remained in continuous use since 1759. Many of the historic Moravian-influenced buildings have been preserved to the present day. In 2001, the Comprehensive Transportation and Land Use Study was completed for the Town of Bethania. The North Suburban Area Plan, which includes the Town of Bethania, recommends this study be used to guide land use decisions.
Kernersville

First known as Kerners Crossroads in 1817, the Town of Kernersville was incorporated after the arrival of the railroad in 1871. Kernersville’s location in the heart of the Triad metropolitan area and proximity to the Piedmont Triad International Airport has stimulated growth. Rural farmland surrounding the town has been sold and turned into large middle-to-upper-class housing developments, and numerous large shopping centers have been built in the town in recent years. The direct transportation links to the surrounding cities and airport have maintained and expanded its industrial, office, commercial, and residential base.

The central area of Kernersville contains several key assets for a vibrant community: the downtown area, historic districts, affordable single-family homes and rental housing. Kernersville is rich with history and tradition but filled with innovative ideas, spirit, and civic pride. The Town has a commitment to growth management that creates high-quality development while maintaining a small town atmosphere.

Clemmons

Clemmons was founded in 1802 by Peter Clemmons who moved to the area from Delaware. One of his descendants, Edwin T. Clemmons, was a stage and mail contractor and owned several stage lines based in Salem that ran to points such as Clemmons, High Point, Raleigh, Asheville, and Wytheville, VA. After the coming of the railroad in the 1870s, Edwin moved his stagecoach business to Asheville but returned before dying leaving money for the construction of a Moravian church and a school.

The Village of Clemmons was incorporated as a municipality in 1986. Today, Clemmons is a thriving community and a desirable place to live and work. The proximity of Clemmons along Interstate 40 to Winston-Salem and surrounding established neighborhoods has contributed to its growth. As the Village has developed, the built environment changed from smaller village-scale development to auto-oriented commercial. Lately, there is a strong desire in the community to redevelop and require new development to reflect the historic community character. In 2010 the Clemmons Village Council adopted Clemmons Community Compass as the community’s comprehensive plan to guide the municipality’s future growth.
Lewisville

The Town of Lewisville was established in the 19th century when Moravian settlers blazed a wagon trail across the pastures and established a community there. Lewisville was named after one of those settlers, Lewis Laugenour, a benefactor who donated lands for development in the central area of town. His home, constructed in the late 1850s, still stands.

Lewisville officially incorporated in 1991 and today is one of the fastest growing communities in Forsyth County with almost 13,000 residents. One of the motivations in moving toward incorporation was to preserve the small town ambience that was threatened by unplanned development. Much attention and planning has gone into preserving the community’s pedestrian-friendly environment in the downtown. Community spirit is fostered through events and activities at the town’s Shallowford Square.

Rural Hall

The community of Rural Hall originated in the late 1700s to early 1800s where the Mount Airy and North Wilkesboro Railroads converged. By the late 1800s a bustling trade and industrial center had developed. A small frame depot was built in 1888, stimulating new businesses and new construction. Along Broad Street, several two-story houses and brick commercial buildings, many of which are still standing, were built by prominent families.

Rural Hall first provided municipal services in 1935 when it formed a sanitary district to provide water and sewer services. The Town of Rural Hall was incorporated in 1974 with a population of just over 1,000. Although the town has grown in size and population to about 3,000 today, it retains a small town character. Rural Hall has primarily developed along two major thoroughfares, Broad Street (NC 66) and Bethania-Rural Hall Road (NC 65), which cross in the northern portion of town at the edge of the downtown area.
Walkertown

Walkertown was named for Dr. Robert Walker who was living at the site by 1771. The area became a center for Methodist settlements by the 1790s. Walkertown grew slowly after the Civil War, but by 1872 the Sullivan and Osburn Tobacco Factory operated in Walkertown. The coming of the Roanoke and Southern Railroad in 1888 resulted in other factories and businesses being built, bringing people into Walkertown in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Town of Walkertown was incorporated in 1984 with a population of 1,366. The town has grown since then in size and population, but it retains a small town character. There is a predominance of low-density single-family housing, agricultural parcels, and undeveloped land with the surrounding area still rural in character. Considerable growth has occurred lately around the intersection of US 158 and NC 66 including commercial and multifamily developments.

Tobaccoville

Tobaccoville was named for a plug chewing tobacco factory owned and operated in the 1870s by Charles Orrender. The Orrender Tobacco Factory was the principal landmark in the area, and the name Tobaccoville was suggested for the post office. This area was the mail route of a four-horse stagecoach that ran from Mount Airy to Winston-Salem.

The Tobaccoville community's desire to maintain its identity, quality of life, and heritage as a community was the motivation of its campaign to incorporate in 1990. Helping in the effort was the desire of R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, which had recently built its most modern cigarette manufacturing facility and opposed annexation moves by the Town of King. Tobaccoville incorporated in 1991. A plan was developed for the community to manage residential and commercial growth while at the same time preserving open space. Development must now follow guidelines the community has created with a prime objective being the preservation of open space.
Policies

Vibrant Town Centers
Develop vibrant town centers that contribute to the individual municipality’s small town atmosphere.

Community Identity
Build on each town’s special and unique character to enhance existing community identity.

Town Plans
Encourage the development and maintenance of comprehensive plans that set out a strategy to achieve each town’s vision.

Communication
Promote communication between all jurisdictions in Forsyth County.

Town Feel and Identity
Ensure that the appearance of existing and new buildings, development patterns, and streetscapes contribute to the desired feel and identity of each town.

Rehabilitate and Retrofit
Continue revitalizing existing developed areas, rehabilitating, and retrofitting older neighborhoods to provide a variety of housing types and attract new investment.

Regulation Continuity
Encourage continuity of basic development regulations between towns, Winston-Salem, and Forsyth County, while still allowing for variations that reflect each community’s character.

Rural Landscapes
Preserve natural features of the existing rural landscapes through conservation efforts in the face of growth pressures.

Action Agenda

Community Character

11.9.1. Infill and Redevelopment Sites
Identify infill opportunity areas and redevelopment sites to efficiently serve the communities.

11.9.2. Strip Commercial Areas
Develop design strategies and secure funding for improvements to strip commercial areas.

Town Centers

11.9.3. Vibrant Town Centers
Establish civic-focused and mixed-use town centers with ground-level retail that will result in vibrant, pedestrian-oriented streets that serve people from surrounding residential and rural areas.

11.9.4. Variety of Housing Types
Provide a variety of housing types and assure affordable housing opportunities.

11.9.5. Attract New Businesses
Continue attracting new businesses and industries to expand job opportunities and broaden the tax base.

Planning Efforts

11.9.6. Plan for Beltway
Develop detailed land use plans for future beltway interchanges due to their close proximity to and traffic impact on towns.

11.9.7. Regional Coordination
Ensure regional coordination and cooperation for land use decisions and utilities provision at the edge of smaller municipalities.

Action Agenda continued on next page
### Action Agenda

11.9.8. Growth in Unincorporated Areas
Coordinate efforts between Forsyth County, regional planning organizations, and neighboring communities to ensure orderly growth in adjacent unincorporated areas.

11.9.9. Exchange Information
Create opportunities for the exchange of information between all planners in Forsyth County on a regular basis.

11.9.10. Umbrella Plan
Use Legacy 2030 as the umbrella plan that establishes the context for town plans.

### Relationship to Rural Areas

11.9.11. Rural Preservation
Protect rural areas by encouraging cluster development patterns and rural preservation (see Chapter 12, Rural Character).

11.9.12. Private Sewer Plants
Develop guidelines to limit development with private sewage treatment plants in the Rural Area.

### Conclusion

The majority of Forsyth County’s projected 120,000 new residents will live in communities within the Urban and Suburban Neighborhoods. To create the future we want means we have to change some of the ways we are currently developing. Forsyth County has a great opportunity to shape future growth in a way that will positively affect the quality of life for everyone, including families, children, and the elderly. Neighborhoods that embrace a variety of housing choices and well-designed nonresidential uses as a vital part of their community should be the new standard for future development and redevelopment.