Health Impact Assessment: Davidson Comprehensive Plan Update

A Health Impact Assessment detailing the progress made in accomplishing the current comprehensive plan and suggesting ways additional health promoting programs, policies, and infrastructure could be incorporated within the re-write of the Davidson Comprehensive Plan scheduled for 2015.

November 2014

A project of Davidson Design for Life in collaboration with a Regional Advisory Commission and funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Healthy Community Design Initiative.
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Introduction

In August 2008, the Town of Davidson embarked on a two-year comprehensive planning process involving extensive stakeholder participation through the use of study groups based on the general topics of Community Character, Community Development, Environmental Sustainability, Economic Development, Mobility, Local Government, and Growth Management.¹ From the initial meetings of these study groups, the eight themes for livability (see Figure 1) emerged and were used to further organize the current conditions and concerns as well as the goals and recommendations of the comprehensive plan. The final plan was adopted by the Davidson Board of Commissioners on August 10, 2010 and an update to the Davidson Comprehensive Plan is scheduled for the 2015 fiscal year.

The purpose of this document is to review the current comprehensive plan through a “public health lens” and recommend ways to strengthen language within the plan to further support healthy community design efforts. With this purpose in mind, the livability themes in Davidson’s comprehensive plan were compared to the Community Health and Wellness Element of the Richmond General Plan, which recognizes 10 components of healthy community planning (see Figure 2).² Additional guidance was provided through the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan Update Health Impact Assessment, the Healthy Planning Guide produced by the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative and Public Health Law and Policy, and the North Carolina Guide to Incorporating Health Considerations into Comprehensive Plans.³-⁵

Initial analysis was conducted by Katherine Hebert, Davidson Design for Life Coordinator with additional input provided by members of the Davidson Design for Life Team, additional town staff, and advisory boards. This report, appendices, and associated efforts will be used to guide the 2015 plan update as well as inform future planning efforts to further incorporate public health considerations as part of the town’s larger Health in All Policies approach (see Figure 4).

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Vision Statement for the Davidson Comprehensive Plan, 2010: Davidson is a creative, safe, scholarly and healthy community that enjoys high quality public services and unique cultural and natural assets. We manage change based on our long-term vision, as defined by the Comprehensive Plan, that promotes livable and vibrant neighborhoods, businesses, landscapes, public spaces, relationships, and public-private partnerships.
Figure 1: Eight Themes for Livability

Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities
Businesses and the local economy thrive in an environment that builds on local assets and protects against threats to the community’s quality of life. It is an environment in which the small entrepreneur and the international corporation can both thrive. Residents are able to work in Davidson, and employers are able to find skilled labor locally.

Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods
Well-designed spaces and neighborhoods depend on collective awareness and responsibility, consideration for others, flexibility and creativity. The “village” looks out for the welfare and safety of all its children, celebrates innovation and accomplishment, and provides public places for citizens to play, work, create, protest, worship, and rest.

Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity
A resilient community needs a population of all ages, ethnicities, income levels, and faiths. It embraces many traditions, promotes personal and fiscal health, affirms a universal sense of place, reaches out to a variety of economic opportunities, and encourages social activity for persons of all ages.

Encourage Committed Civic Involvement and Responsibility
Civic life is sustained by local leaders, residents and business owners through generous volunteerism, mentoring, communication, and education. The expectation is that individuals, families, neighborhoods, businesses, institutions, and local government will reach out to one another to receive and provide support.

Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food and Energy Use
Healthy lifestyles increasingly favor non-motorized travel, local foods, renewable energy, and recycled materials. Citizens and business owners find these sustainable choices to be as financially viable, convenient, and efficient than more conventional choices.

Enable Faithful Stewardship of the Natural and Historic Resources
Living ecosystems are blind to political boundaries, so their stewards must manage natural migration corridors, habitats, and the impact of human activity. Stewardship also acknowledges that the natural succession, technological advancement, economic shifts, and human interest in the natural and cultural landscape all influence management plans.

Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services
An effective government is one that is open and is sustained by active citizen participation, well-managed spending, growing revenues, far-reaching vision, and dependable partnerships. Local government contributes to public life by protecting the health, safety and welfare of its citizens; equal access and innovative public services; and adequate levels of staffing.

Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles
Meaningful architecture and land development reflect the sound planning principles of the past and present, impose minimal impact on neighboring properties, provide goods and services within walkable distances, protect sensitive natural areas, and discourage the unnecessary conversion of open space to developed uses.
Figure 2: Ten Components of Community Health and Wellness

Access to Recreation and Open Space

**Health Impacts:** increased physical activity, greater social cohesion, improved neighborhood safety, improved mental health, improved environmental health

Access to Healthy Foods

**Health Impacts:** improved nutrition, reduced prevalence of obesity, reduced incidence of hunger

Access to Medical and Emergency Care Services

**Health Impacts:** better preventive care, improved treatment of disease, quicker response time for emergency treatment

Access to Public Transit and Active Transportation

**Health Impacts:** injury prevention, reduced air and noise pollution, increased mobility and health equity, increased physical activity

Access to Quality Affordable Housing

**Health Impacts:** greater social and economic integration, reduced overcrowding, sanitary living conditions

Access to Economic Opportunity

**Health Impacts:** lower health risks, improved quality of life, increased access to medical care, increased access to healthy lifestyle behaviors

Completeness of Neighborhoods

**Health Impacts:** increased physical activity, reduced air emissions, greater social cohesion, improved neighborhood safety, improved mental health

Safe Neighborhoods and Public Spaces

**Health Impacts:** reduced crime and violence, greater social cohesion, improved mental health, quicker response time for emergency treatment

Environmental Quality

**Health Impacts:** reduced respiratory diseases, reduced instances of heart disease, reduced risk of cancers, improved mental health, reduced toxic exposure

Green and Sustainable Development and Practices

**Health Impacts:** better environmental health, increased economic opportunities, increased access to local foods, improved daily physical activity opportunities, increased community character and social cohesion
An Overview of the Connection between Public Health and Planning

Where we live, work, play, and worship affects our health, quality of life, and length of life. The field of planning, through various policies and processes and in conjunction with the activities of the private sector and different departments within the public sector, shapes what is called the built environment. The built environment includes all of the physical parts of where we live including homes, buildings, streets, open spaces, and public infrastructure. Decisions that impact the built environment, impact the options people have and the choices people can make, and ultimately impact the health of a population. For example, if a person has access to parks, sidewalks, and bike lanes in a safe neighborhood they are more likely to go outside and walk, ride a bike, or go play in the park. It is easier for that individual to work physical activity into his or her daily life than say someone who lives in a neighborhood without these features. The same theory applies to access to healthy food, affordable housing, economic opportunity, clean air and water, and medical services. By creating a healthy built environment and making the healthier choices easier for people to make, the health of the community as a whole− public health− improves.

Figure 3: Diagram of the Ten Components of Community Health and Wellness
Figure 4: Seven Dimensions of Health

Physical
The ability to maintain a healthy quality of life that allows us to get through our daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress. The ability to recognize that our behaviors impact our wellness and to adopt healthful habits while avoiding destructive habits.

Emotional
The ability to understand ourselves and cope with the challenges life can bring. The ability to acknowledge and share feelings of anger, fear, sadness or stress, hope love, joy and happiness in a productive manner.

Social
The ability to relate to and connect with other people in our world and establish and maintain positive relationships with family, friends, and co-workers.

Environmental
The ability to recognize our own responsibility for the quality of the air, the water, and the land that surrounds us. The ability to make a positive impact on the quality of our environment, be it our homes, our communities, or our planet.

Spiritual
The ability to establish peace and harmony in our lives. The ability to develop congruency between values and actions and to realize a common purpose that binds creation together.

Intellectual
The ability to open our minds to new ideas and experiences that can be applied to personal decisions, group interaction, and community betterment. The desire to learn new concepts, improve skills, and seek challenges in pursuit of lifelong learning.

Economic (Occupational)
The ability to get fulfillment form our jobs or career fields while still maintaining balance in our lives. Our desire to contribute in our careers to make a positive impact on the organizations we work in and to society as a whole.
Summary of Health Conditions in Davidson

Health data is not readily available for a town the size of Davidson (population 11,000). The majority of health data (morbidity and mortality) is collected through self-reported phone surveys (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Youth Risk Factor Surveillance System, etc.) or through death records and aggregated at the county level. The Town of Davidson is a municipality found within Mecklenburg County, North Carolina which also contains the most populated city in North Carolina— Charlotte— which skews any health data available at the county level. The 2010 Mecklenburg County Health Assessment also provides a snapshot of health conditions in Mecklenburg and is updated regularly.7

Efforts have been made recently to provide mapping for social determinants of health and health indicators at a “neighborhood” level through the Charlotte Mecklenburg Quality of Life Dashboard.8 The health indicators included within the dashboard include: age of death; birth to adolescents; Medicaid population; North Carolina State Children’s Health Choice population, and residents within ½ mile of a chain grocery store, pharmacy, Medicaid provider or free clinic, and public outdoor recreation area. For each indicator, the dashboard provides a map, the description of the indicator, the source of the data used to make the map, a comparison of each “neighborhood” and the county level, and additional resources. The following is a summary of health conditions in Davidson based on what is available at the smallest geographic level possible.

Health Status and Healthy Days

According to the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 21% of Mecklenburg residents feel as if they are in excellent health, 34% very good health, 31% in good health, 10% in fair health, and 3.5% in poor health. When asked how many days in the past 30 days was your physical health not good (due to illness or injury), 10% indicated 1-2 days, 10% indicated 3-7 days, 67% indicated 8-29 days, and 6% all 30 days. When asked about their mental health in the past 30 days, 9% indicated poor mental health in 1-2 days, 9% in 3-7 days, 10% in 8-29 days, and 5% in all 30 days. In addition to feeling poorly, these poor physical or mental health days prevented people from participating in their usual activities such as self-care, work, or recreation 1 or more days 22% of the time.9

Chronic Health Conditions

A chronic condition is a human health condition or disease that is persistent or otherwise long-lasting in its effects or a disease that comes with time. According to the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 23% of Mecklenburg residents have one chronic disease and 19% have two or more chronic diseases.

Table 1: Chronic Disease Morbidity Rates in Mecklenburg County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Percent of Mecklenburg County with Disease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart Attack</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angina or Coronary Heart Disease</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin Cancer</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Cancer</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Emphysema, Chronic Bronchitis</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Gout, Lupus, Fibromyalgia</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression, Dysthymia</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Obesity

According to the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 21% of Mecklenburg residents are inactive (no physical activity within the last 30 days) and only 53% are getting the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Fruit, vegetable, and bean consumption is also low with only 11% of Mecklenburg residents getting the recommended five or more fruits, vegetables, or beans a day. Sixty-one percent of Mecklenburg residents are obese or overweight (defined as having a body mass index greater than 25).

Leading Causes of Death and Life Expectancy

The leading cause of death in Mecklenburg County are:

1. Cancer
2. Heart Disease
3. Stroke
4. Alzheimer’s Disease
5. Unintentional Injury
6. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
7. Diabetes
8. Kidney Disease
9. Influenza and Pneumonia
10. Septicemia

The average age of death in Mecklenburg County is 67. The average age of death in the five “neighborhoods” making up Davidson according to the dashboard is also 67 (see Map 1).

Births to Adolescents

Research shows that teenage pregnancy is associated with increased risk of poor social, economic and health outcomes for both mother and child. Higher rates of births to adolescents may influence trends in education variables and reflect accessibility issues with health education and health providers as well as a number of other socioeconomic factors. Mecklenburg County has a rate of 4% of births being to adolescents (under the age of 19). There were zero births reported in 2009 and 2010 for the “neighborhoods” in Davidson (see Map 2).

Medicaid Population and North Carolina’s State Children’s Health Choice Population

Medicaid provides health coverage for low-income individuals and families. High or an increasing number of Medicaid recipients may be connected to other issues such as access to healthcare providers and usually reflects high rates of unemployment or policy changes which expand eligibility. Thirteen percent of individuals in Mecklenburg County receive Medicaid and an average of 2% of Davidson (see Map 3).

The North Carolina State Children’s Health Choice is a program that provides health care for low-income children that do not qualify for Medicaid and who are not insured through a private healthcare provider. Six percent of children in Mecklenburg County are part of the program and 4% of the children in Davidson’s northwestern “neighborhood” are enrolled in the program (see Map 4).
Map 1: Age of Death in Mecklenburg County
Map 2: Births to Adolescents in Mecklenburg County
Map 4: North Carolina State Children’s Health Choice Population in Mecklenburg County
Access to a Chain Grocery Store

Chain groceries are one measure of access to healthy foods as they offer fresh meat, dairy and produce in one location. National studies report the presence of affordable fresh food in a community has the potential to improve resident’s nutrition and overall health. Thirty-eight percent of Mecklenburg residents and 36% of Davidson residents are within a ½ mile of a grocery store, with the northwestern “neighborhood” of Davidson having 80% access (see Map 5).

Access to a Pharmacy

Prescription drugs allow many to control chronic disease and disability and easy access is a major factor in compliance. Pharmacists can also be an “in-community” resource for health information and acute care if the pharmacy includes a clinic. Twenty-eight percent of Mecklenburg residents are within a ½ mile of a pharmacy and 36% of Davidson residents with the northwestern “neighborhood” having 56% access (see Map 6).

Access to a Medicaid or Free Clinic

This indicator examines the location of all healthcare providers including primary care, OB/GYN, internal medicine, and pediatrics and free health clinics within a neighborhood. Eighteen percent of Mecklenburg residents and 7% of Davidson residents are within a ½ mile of a Medicaid provider or free clinic, with the northwestern “neighborhood” of Davidson having 35% access (see Map 7).

Access to a Public Outdoor Recreation Area

Outdoor recreational facilities provide free opportunities for physical activity and social interaction which are key components of good physical and mental health. Seventy-two percent of Mecklenburg residents and 77% of Davidson residents are within a ½ mile of a park, with the middle two “neighborhoods” of Davidson having over 90% access (see Map 8).

Other

Additional health statistics are included within relevant sections of the Comprehensive Plan such as additional information on healthy food consumption and preparation within the Access to Healthy Food section.
Map 5: Residents within ½ Mile of a Chain Grocery Store in Mecklenburg County
Map 6: Residents within ½ Mile of a Pharmacy in Mecklenburg County
Map 7: Residents within ½ Mile of a Medicaid Provider or Free Clinic in Mecklenburg County
Map 8: Residents within ½ Mile of a Public Outdoor Recreation Area in Mecklenburg County
Access to Recreation and Open Space

Health Impacts
- Increased physical activity
- Greater social cohesion
- Improved neighborhood safety
- Improved mental health
- Improved environmental health

Livability Themes
- Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources
- Provide Sustainable and Health Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use
- Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods
- Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services

Description of Component

Access to recreational opportunities and open space (defined here to include areas of naturally preserved lands, natural viewsheds, community gardens, and public areas that are landscaped or intended for public gatherings) can lead to increases in physical activity and subsequent health outcomes. The many health benefits of being physically active include: reduced risks of coronary heart disease, hypertension, stroke, some cancers, diabetes, and obesity. Having access to nature (whether being physically out in natural settings or viewing nature from a window) and opportunities to gather with friends or family or have chance encounters with neighbors have been shown to have additional mental health benefits including: stress reduction, attention restoration, feelings of inclusion, and a reduction in depression.

The preservation of open space can also have multiple environmental benefits including carbon sequestration, ground water purification, storm water management, and the protection of natural habitats and migration corridors.  

Current Conditions (2014)

Parks and Open Space: Acreage and Description of Facilities

According to the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Town of Davidson currently owns and maintains 17 different parks and 4.1 miles of greenways (see Table 2 & Maps 9 & 22). These parks range from active (McEver Fields and River Run Athletic Fields) to passive (Fisher Farm Park and Faulkner Park) recreational facilities. The town has a total of 696.8 acres of parks including some shared park facilities (Bradford Park).  

In addition to parks and open space maintained by the Town of Davidson, residents may also have limited access to school facilities (based on joint-use agreements and personal connections with the school such as working or attending the school) and other private or regional recreational facilities (based on membership, residing in the neighborhood, or agreements with other municipalities). School facilities include Community School of Davidson High School, Davidson College, Davidson Day School, Davidson Elementary School, and Lake Norman Christian School. Other private and regional recreational facilities include Bailey Road Park, Lake Norman YMCA, Legion Park, private development amenities, and Smithville Park.
Table 2: Parks Owned or Maintained by the Town of Davidson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abersham Park</td>
<td>236.5</td>
<td>Located just north of Fisher Farm Park off Shearer Road, Abersham Park is a nature preserve with access roads, trails and parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ada Jenkins Center</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Located in northwest Davidson, the facilities at the Ada Jenkins Center and fields include a multipurpose field, an outdoor basketball court, indoor mini-gymnasium, public meeting spaces, restrooms, a playground and seating areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and Fields</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford Park</td>
<td>211.7</td>
<td>Located in southeast Davidson, this park is a shared facility with Huntersville Parks and Recreation and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation. Davidson has access to one large baseball field and one small baseball field during the week. The park also includes a playground, disc golf course, restrooms and soccer fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caldwell Green Tot Lot</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>This fully-enclosed neighborhood park, located in the St. Alban’s neighborhood, features benches, tables, a large sandbox, shade structures, trike path, tunnel, riding toys and a drinking fountain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faulkner Square Park</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>A formal garden square located in the St. Alban’s neighborhood, this space includes two decorative trellises, benches for seating and lawn areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher Farm Park</td>
<td>198.2</td>
<td>This district park is located south of Abersham Park on Shearer Road. Currently the park includes 12 miles of multipurpose trails, primitive camping sites, picnic tables and parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Park Playground</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Located in St. Alban’s neighborhood, the Forest Park playground is a neighborhood park with a playground, picnic tables, trails and a wetland area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jetton Street Park</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>Located on Jetton Street, the Jetton Street Park is a small pocket park next to Harris Teeter. It includes one playground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Davidson Nature Park</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>Lake Davidson Nature Preserve is located on Jetton Street and provides frontage to Lake Davidson. It has nature trails, a kayak/canoe launch and storage racks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn Park</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Located in the St. Alban’s neighborhood, Lawn Park is a grassy area in the center of the development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McEver Fields</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>McEver Fields is a community park located south of downtown on South Street, near Davidson Elementary School. It consists of 3 lighted softball/baseball fields, a picnic area, restrooms and concessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parham Park</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Parham Park is a neighborhood park located on Lake Cornelius. It consists of a natural surface trail, a kayak/canoe launch with storage racks and exercise stations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Run Athletic Park</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>This community park is located southeast of downtown off Davidson-Concord Road. Its facilities include one baseball/softball field, one multipurpose field, a drinking fountain and winterized restrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt Wilson Park</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Roosevelt Wilson Park is located on Griffith Street as one approaches downtown from Interstate 77. It has a central pond, paved trails, winterized restrooms, playground and picnic shelter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summit Tot Lot</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>The Summit Tot Lot is located in downtown Davidson behind Summit Coffee and includes benches and playground equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Preserve Dog Park</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>This fully-enclosed dog park in the St. Alban’s neighborhood features a hiking trail, natural area, parking lot, water fountain, horseshoes and picnic tables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Green</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Located in the center of town, the Village Green is a large grassy area used for passive recreation and events.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The existing Level of Service analysis compares current demand to the current supply of recreation acreage. Davidson will soon have 887 acres of recreational facilities (this includes Alison Farm and West Branch Nature Preserve which are currently owned by Mecklenburg County but expected to be maintained by Davidson in the near future). Given the generally accepted park planning standards, roughly 10 acres per 1,000 residents, and the current population of 11,484 (2012), Davidson is currently operating a system that is exceeding its demand. However, much of the acreage comprises naturally-preserved lands. When those lands are excluded, Davidson only has 13.5 acres of active parkland. Much of the demand for active recreational opportunities are being served through joint-use agreements with schools, and access to private amenities and regional recreation facilities within Davidson or the surrounding municipalities of Cornelius and Huntersville (see Tables 4-5).

A future Level of Service analysis was also conducted in the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan using a population growth multiplier of 2.4% every year totaling a forecasted population of 18,883 people in 2030. The following tables estimate future demand based on expected population growth and the same standards used during the current Level of Service analysis (see Tables 6-7).

The fastest growing age cohorts from 2014 to 2030 are expected to be 35-44, 45-55, and 65 years old and older. By analyzing trends with these cohorts, additional facility needs can be identified for the 2030 population.

**Table 3: Trends and Potential Facilities and Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohort</th>
<th>Trends</th>
<th>Potential Facilities and Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35-55</td>
<td>• Affected most by trends&lt;br&gt;• Family, one-stop shopping&lt;br&gt;• Individuals&lt;br&gt;• Environment &amp; education&lt;br&gt;• Enhanced discretionary income&lt;br&gt;• Community-minded&lt;br&gt;• Need convenience &amp; want comfort&lt;br&gt;• Work longer hours&lt;br&gt;• Stressed&lt;br&gt;• Short discreet blocks of time&lt;br&gt;• Shift to more low pressure games</td>
<td>• Volunteer programs&lt;br&gt;• Multipurpose facilities&lt;br&gt;• Alternative camping&lt;br&gt;• Dance&lt;br&gt;• Movies&lt;br&gt;• Food &amp; drink&lt;br&gt;• Trails&lt;br&gt;• Relaxation skills&lt;br&gt;• Water sports&lt;br&gt;• Gardening&lt;br&gt;• Mini-Soccer&lt;br&gt;• Pickleball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and Older</td>
<td>• Enhanced discretionary income&lt;br&gt;• Longer retirement period&lt;br&gt;• Higher leisure literacy (more expectations)&lt;br&gt;• Greater concerns for health issues&lt;br&gt;• Need for social spaces and all-inclusive facilities</td>
<td>• Aquatics/ Warm water therapy&lt;br&gt;• Gyms&lt;br&gt;• Arts &amp; crafts studios&lt;br&gt;• Dance&lt;br&gt;• Movies&lt;br&gt;• Food &amp; drink&lt;br&gt;• Walking programs&lt;br&gt;• Large cardio fitness space&lt;br&gt;• Educational programs&lt;br&gt;• Indoor recreational facilities&lt;br&gt;• Health-focused classes and programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4: Existing Demand by Acres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Category</th>
<th>Total Acres Recommended per 10,000 Residents</th>
<th>Existing Facilities</th>
<th>Existing Demand for Davidson’s Current Population (2012)</th>
<th>Current Gap (Acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports Fields</strong></td>
<td>Soccer, multi-use, baseball/ softball</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Courts</strong></td>
<td>Tennis, basketball, volleyball</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoor Recreation</strong></td>
<td>Skate park, dirt trails, fishing access, etc.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>840.6</td>
<td>840.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Recreational Facilities</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5: Existing Demand by Number of Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports Fields</strong></td>
<td>Soccer/ Multi-Use</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baseball/ Softball</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Courts</strong></td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoor Recreation</strong></td>
<td>Small Skate Park (7,000 sq ft)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-Size Skate Park (17,000 sq ft)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paved Trail (per mile)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nature Trail (per mile)</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leisure</strong></td>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Recreational Facilities</strong></td>
<td>Pool</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor Event Venue (per acre)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 6: Future Demand by Acres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Category</th>
<th>Total Acres Recommended per 10,000 Residents</th>
<th>Existing Facilities</th>
<th>Total Number of Acres Needed (2030)</th>
<th>Current + Future Gap (Acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Fields</td>
<td>Soccer, multi-use, baseball/ softball</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courts</td>
<td>Tennis, basketball, volleyball</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Recreation</td>
<td>Skate park, dirt trails, fishing access, etc.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>840.6</td>
<td>840.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Recreational Facilities</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7: Future Demand by Number of Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Category</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Existing Facilities</th>
<th>Total Number of Facilities Needed (2030)</th>
<th>Current + Future Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
<td>Without Schools</td>
<td>With Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Fields</td>
<td>Soccer/ Multi-Use</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baseball/ Softball</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courts</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Recreation</td>
<td>Small Skate Park (7,000 sq ft)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-Size Skate Park (17,000 sq ft)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paved Trail (per mile)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nature Trail (per mile)</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Recreational Facilities</td>
<td>Pool</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor Event Venue (per acre)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Connectivity to Parks and Open Space

 Convenient access to parks and open space (within a mile of residents) is an indicator of likely use, especially by those who are unable to drive such as children, older adults, or low-income individuals and families without a vehicle. As part of the Davidson Walks and Rolls Active Transportation Plan, one mile and half mile service areas were determined for parks and schools. Further analysis mapped out routes that were suitable for family use, confident commuters, or bold bicyclists (see Maps 10-13). Although 100% of residents are within a quarter mile of a park, the bicycle suitability for the majority of the larger parks (Fisher Farm, Abersham, and Bradford) are not on “family friendly” streets. However, the majority of neighborhood parks are along streets designated for family use based on facilities, speeds, and traffic volume. Additional improvements such as off-street bike paths or greenways connecting the parks found on Grey Road to “family friendly” streets found in the neighborhoods of St. Alban’s and River Run would increase access to these parks by those who are unable to drive.

 Since a lot of the programs and active recreation opportunities are coordinated in conjunction with local schools, bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to schools is also an important component of measuring access to recreation and open space. The majority of schools are directly on streets appropriate for family use, but depending on where participants live, they may have to travel on or cross a number of roads designated as being suitable only for confident commuters (Griffith St., Beaty St., Bailey Rd., Concord Rd., Davidson-Concord Rd.) or bold bicyclists (South Main St., Davidson-Concord Rd.). A similar situation exists for pedestrians with the majority of schools being located directly on a comfortable walking environment but with sidewalk gaps or sidewalks on only one side of the road resulting in less than ideal situations leading up to the schools.

 Another consideration for connectivity is public transportation (Charlotte Area Transit System) and shuttles offered by service providers (Davidson Parks and Recreation), especially for planned events or overnight trips. By better publicizing transit routes and times, expanding services, or making shuttles or carpooling regularly available to participants, participation rates could increase.

 Joint Use Agreements/ Partnerships

 Davidson currently has one formal joint use agreement with Community School of Davidson which allows the use of their gyms and classrooms for basketball and summer programming. Other partnerships include: Ada Jenkins for joint programs and gymnasium use, Davidson Elementary for gymnasium use and after-school programs, Davidson Youth Baseball for registration and use of ball fields, Wooden Stone for cooking classes, Davidson Lands Conservancy/ World of Wonder for nature programming, and the Davidson Farmer’s Market for sustainability programs.

 Scholarship Program

 Davidson does have a scholarship program that allows any child within Davidson who qualifies for reduced or free lunch to receive a discount of 50% (for reduced lunch) or 75% (for free lunch) for recreational programs and summer camps. Each family can receive up to $300 in scholarships per calendar year. This year, 5 families took advantage of this program.
Map 10: Davidson’s Walking and Biking Service Areas Around Parks and Recreation Areas

The Walk and Bike Service Areas are drawn around local amenities. These are buffers that measure distance from amenities along the walkable and bikeable networks. A portion of High Priority Areas inside the sheds. However the majority of these underserved communities fall outside of the walk and bike sheds.
Map 11: Davidson’s Walking and Biking Service Areas Around Schools

The **Walk and Bike Service Areas** are drawn around local amenities. These are buffers that measure distance from amenities along the walkable and bikeable networks.

A portion of the **High Priority Areas** are inside the sheds. However, the majority of these underserved communities fall outside of the walk and bike sheds.
Map 12: Davidson’s Bicycle Suitability Analysis

Bicycle Suitability Index

Street Stress Analysis

Bicycle Suitability Results
- Family Friendly
- Confident Commuter
- Bold Bicyclist

Destinations and Recreational Facilities
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Private/Charter
- Davidson College
- Downtown
- Park
- Ingersoll Rand
- YMCA
- Bradford Store
- Pool

Jurisdictions
- Town of Davidson
- Extra Territorial Jurisdiction

The Street Stress Analysis evaluates the level of stress imposed on a cyclist based on roadway conditions.

This model uses the existing bike network, vehicular speed limits and traffic volume to evaluate stress.

Data obtained via Mecklenburg County US Census (2010) and the Mecklenburg County of Life Dashboard
Map Created June 28, 2013
Map 13: Davidson’s Pedestrian Suitability Analysis

Pedestrian Suitability Index

Sidewalk Stress Analysis

Pedestrian Suitability Results
- High Comfort
- Moderate Comfort
- Low Comfort

Destinations and Recreational Facilities
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Private/Charter
- Davidson College
- Downtown
- Park
- Ingersoll Rand
- YMCA
- Bradford Store
- Pool

Jurisdictions
- Town of Davidson
- Extra Territorial Jurisdiction

The Sidewalk Stress Analysis evaluates the level of stress imposed on a pedestrian based on roadway and sidewalk conditions. This model uses the existing sidewalk network, vehicular speed limits, and traffic volume to evaluate stress.
Programs Offered and Attendance

Each year a wide variety of recreation programs are offered including:

- youth sports teams (baseball, softball, soccer, t-ball, basketball, football, etc.)
- summer camps (all-sports, archery, fencing, etc.)
- trainings (babysitting, CPR, QPR, etc.)
- life skill courses (cooking, composting, building a rain garden, interview skills, meditation, talent development, modern manners, etc.)
- arts and crafts (water color, oil and acrylic painting, pottery, etc.)
- outdoor education (little explorers, outdoor adventures, etc.)
- exercise programs (crossfit, paddleboard, Tai Chi, etc.).

In 2014, over 120 programs were offered including 79 summer camps that had a participation rate of 878 participants. Recreational programs are offered during the terms of January to May, June to August, and September to December. Typical participation during non-summer months is 525 people. According to a survey conducted during the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, team youth sports, summer camps, and arts or cultural classes have the highest participation rates. Typical participation in recreational programs take place mainly during daytime hours on the weekend (69.3% report participating in recreational programs during this time period) or weekday (37.5%), and weekday nights (35.1%).

Top reasons for participating in programs include: to exercise (82.8%), because it’s fun (68.9%), to socialize (60.5%), and to explore and/or connect with nature (58.8%). Specifically in regards to health, 95% uses parks and recreational programs to be physically active, 39% to manage their weight, and 51% to reduce stress. Twenty-one participants also indicated that they use parks and recreational programs to manage diabetes, treat hypertension, and recover from or live with cancer.

Possible gaps in programming identified included: offering more programs for teenagers, adults, and those with disabilities, and offering additional pre-school programs, nature-based programs, life skills programs, special events, yoga/pilates, and fitness classes.

Tree Canopy

Having access to nature or views of nature within an urban setting has multiple environmental, physical, and mental health benefits including providing shade, filtering air pollutants, reducing heat island effect, and reducing stress. According to a 2010 analysis conducted by American Forests, Mecklenburg County lost 33% of its tree canopy and 3% of its open space between 1985 and 2008 (see Map 14). This loss of tree canopy resulted in a loss of ability to naturally manage 252 million cubic feet of stormwater (valued at $504 million) and remove approximately 3.8 million pounds of air pollutants annually (valued at $8.8 million annually). As of 2008, Mecklenburg County had a 50% tree canopy cover, providing 1.4 billion cubic feet of stormwater services, removing 14.9 million pounds of air pollutants, and storing 7.5 million tons of carbon within the tree’s wood. By 2015, it is estimated that Mecklenburg County will lose another 5% of open space and 3% of trees while increasing in urban area by another 9%. Despite tree ordinances and tree removal permits, Davidson has also lost tree canopy as development has increased (see Map 15).
Map 14: Mecklenburg County Tree Loss 1985-2008
Map 15: Tree Canopy in Davidson
### Livability Theme: Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions and Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Discontinuous preserved open space areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No clear plan for open space preservation and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vast natural resources and agricultural land in rural area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commitment to preserving lakeshore habitats and public access to shoreline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inadequate tree preservation ordinance enabling legislation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Goals and Recommendations

#### Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space

**Short-Term Recommendations:** An open space plan should describe priority natural areas for preservation and enhancement. Policies should be reevaluated to preserve well-connected and quality habitats, significant farmland, and accessible park areas.

- Create a new Open Space Plan
- Use the Natural Assets Inventory as a decision-making tool for open space preservation
- Reevaluate whether utility corridors count toward open space requirements
- Redefine open space requirements to prioritize preservation of sensitive habitats in development
- Evaluate public perceptions, definitions and value of various types of open space
- Redefine viewsheds to include a variety of spaces along public streets and greenways

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The Town of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, and local conservation organizations should allocate funding toward the purchase of open space property. However, it is anticipated that most open space will be acquired through development and conservation easements.

- Encourage the Davidson Lands Conservancy (DLC) to secure more conservation easements
- Create succession and management plans for protected property
- Protect migration corridors and preserve open space across property lines
- Identify significant natural open space in the downtown and Village Infill Planning Area
- Preserve most of the undeveloped rural area
- Work with neighboring jurisdictions to preserve contiguous and valuable open space
- Protect viewsheds along greenways and roads in rural area
- Recognize the evolutionary nature of open space
- Reward open space stewardship
- Continue to require open space preservation as part of development in the rural area
- Monitor and minimize development impacts on significant ecosystems

#### Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy

**Short-Term Recommendations:** Town staff and local non-profit organizations should educate residents and property owners on water conservation, pruning techniques and native plant species. As the historic tree canopy in the downtown area ages, the town and residents should replant with native, hardwood species.

- Work toward designation as a Tree City USA
- Promote healthy pruning techniques
- Set measurable goals to increase and sustain the urban forest
- Consider using only native, drought-tolerant species in town landscaping projects
- Create a “tree bank” for developers and home-owners to mitigate for tree removal and provide funding for new replanting efforts
- Create a tree canopy replanting and management plan
- Allocate significant staff time to urban forestry activities
• Establish a small grant fund to assist low income property owners with removal or pruning of trees
• Revise open space or tree preservation requirements to better preserve existing tree canopy in all planning areas

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Several public access areas should be made available on Lake Davidson for canoes, swimming, and fishing. The Town of Davidson staff should employ more sustainable management practices of publicly owned open space. The Davidson Lands Conservancy should become a regional leader in sustainable management techniques.

- Require undisturbed upland buffers surrounding delineated wetlands
- Construct more off road greenways for habitat preservation
- Minimize development impact on existing vegetation
- Promote native tree planting and prohibit invasive species
- Bury utility lines along all public streets
- Implement sustainable management practices on publicly owned open space
- Balance the need for roads with tree canopy protection
- Implement the Tree Inventory (2007) recommendations for urban canopy maintenance
- Use Lake Davidson as a teaching opportunity about water quality
- Protect the shorelines of Lake Davidson and Lake Cornelius
- Provide a safe and public access on local lakes for swimming, canoeing and fishing
- Continue to monitor water quality in the lakes

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space**

- An Open Space Plan is currently being created as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan which will look at how open space is defined and have a framework of promoting the seven dimensions of health.
- The re-write of the planning ordinance has led to discussions on open space requirements/preservation, viewsheds, significant natural areas, and the protection of migration corridors.
- Davidson Lands Conservancy continues to work with the Town of Davidson and surrounding municipalities to secure additional conservation easements, protect wildlife corridors, and manage protected lands.

**Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy**

- The Town of Davidson was awarded Tree City USA in 2010 and hopes to receive Tree City Growth in 2014.
- Discussions about creating a “tree bank” have been part of the Planning Ordinance re-write process.
- Progress has been made on implementing sustainable practices in landscaping and protecting tree canopy especially on publicly owned lands.
- The Davidson Nature Preserve and kayak/canoe access points on the lakes have increased access and protection of shorelines.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

+ Update the tree/natural assets inventory
+ Develop park plans for Abersham and Fisher Farm including park amenities and preservation areas
+ Create an educational signage to share information about environmental health, water bodies/quality, habitat conservation, flora and fauna, historic buildings and agricultural properties
+ Place parks, greenways, trails, or public spaces along water bodies whenever possible to protect water quality and increase access to the water
+ Increase conservation easements along waterways/water bodies and address concerns about public use and liability with property owners
+ Increase diversity of street tree plantings to protect from specie-specific insects or fungi
+ Designate a staff liaison for tree related questions and education activities
+ Develop a water quality protection organization or partner with existing organizations such as the Catawba Lands Conservancy
Bury utility lines and protect viewsheds of green spaces whenever possible during redevelopment or initial development.
Work with Davidson Lands Conservancy to develop succession and long term management plans for protected property/easements.
Develop a recognition program for environmental stewards in Davidson or the Lake Norman Area.
Remove unclear or unreasonable goals such as “preserve most of the undeveloped rural area” or “recognize the evolutionary nature of open space.”

**Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Health Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions and Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Conflicts between increasing demand for new rural roads and desired rural viewshed protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grassroot leadership in community gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong support for Davidson Farmers Market and local farming industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Multiple cycling, running, and sports-recreation clubs and organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interest in making streets and public spaces senior-friendly and accessible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* As the costs of owning and driving motor vehicles increase, residents will become more interested in walking and using bicycles for local trips. However, the majority of residents do not feel safe sharing the roads or know enough about local pedestrian or bicycle networks to make efficient use of them. Town staff and local pedestrian and cycling advocates should continue to educate residents about the benefits of cycling and walking.

- Provide bicycle storage, changing facilities, and increased bicycle parking
- Install more bike racks and walkways downtown, in commercial and civic centers
- Support local cycling clubs, retailers and cycling advocates
- Improve signage on local greenways to identify distances and nearby destinations
- Post educational materials about active living to the town website

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Develop partnerships between the town, Davidson College, state agencies, health professionals, and residents to promote active lifestyle choices. Pilot programs, such as the Fit Davidson initiative, should be continued as a way to encourage the community to be more active and less dependent on motor vehicles.

- Help coordinate walking and running clubs
- Continue to sponsor bike helmet fit clinics and bicycle safety rodeos
- Create a shared bike program similar to Davidson College

**Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Davidson should focus on providing easy and affordable access to local or regional food sources. Open space within the town limits are opportunities for community gardening and sustainable land management. Land development policies should be evaluated for how well they support agriculture and food production.

- Encourage homeowners associations to create community gardens in common open space
- Encourage urban food production and pocket gardens on public property

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Davidson should consider ways to ensure the success of the Davidson Farmer’s Market and other local agricultural distribution networks. The Rural Planning Area should be promoted as a prime location for small to medium-sized working farms.

- Secure land for community farming in the rural area
- Encourage agricultural use of open space land in residential subdivisions
- Require new development proposals to assess impacts on surrounding active farms and protected open space

## Progress

### Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel

- A lot of progress has been made in increasing: bicycle parking, supporting facilities, education and safety programs, bicycling clubs, and signage.
- Educational materials on active living have been posted to the website and the Parks and Recreation Department and the Police Department continue to support clinics and clubs for walking, running, and biking.

### Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods

- Some progress on creating community gardens has been made (Davidson Community Garden and St. Albans Community Garden).
- Additional progress on promoting urban food production, protecting active farmland, creating pocket gardens, and supporting the agricultural use of property in residential subdivisions is needed and expected as part of the Food Systems Plan being created as part of the Davidson Design for Life Health Impact Assessment initiative.

## Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Recognize roads as the largest network of public space and make them safe for all users (walkers, bikers, drivers)
+ Further examine the connectivity of parks to neighborhoods by bicycle, walking, and bus
+ Consider a bike share and tool share program for increasing active transportation and gardening efforts
+ Help coordinate local community or neighborhood gardening efforts including providing information, land, water, and startup supplies when possible
+ Establish an agricultural district including protection from nuisance suits and providing signage/marketing efforts as a protected agricultural area

## Livability Theme: Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods

### Conditions and Concerns

- Lack of public community and neighborhood gathering places
- Limited funding sources for public art and landscape enhancements
- Growing interest in public art
- Increasing inventory of undeveloped town or county owned properties

### Goals and Recommendations

#### Goal 1: Maintain the Downtown as a High-Quality Pedestrian Environment and Civic Center

**Short-Term Recommendations:** Staff and officials should plan for an outstanding pedestrian environment in the downtown, transit, and Exit 30 areas. Town staff should develop strategies to maximize the efficiency of parking in the downtown area, possibly requiring a new parking deck. Additional wayfinding signage and maps should indicate bike and walking routes to local and regional destinations.

- Create a downtown parking plan for motor vehicles and bicycles
- Add signage for the Lake Norman Regional Bicycle Plan and the Carolina Thread Trail
- Require that new mixed use developments reserve areas for civic uses

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The town and residents should work with civic organizations to ensure their continued success in downtown and other neighborhood centers. The downtown should be well connected to other regional destinations via multi-use paths and transit. Police should monitor public safety in the downtown as night life becomes more active.

- Build the Carolina Thread Trail and Lake Norman Regional Bicycle Plan improvements
Goal 2: Encourage New Public Art Placement and Gateway Signage

Short-Term Recommendations: The town’s identity should be promoted for the benefit of visitors, new residents and relationships with regional stakeholders. Recommendations from small area and marketing plans should be referenced as the town promotes its quality of life and community character.

- Improve signage for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities

Ongoing Initiatives: New amenities such as public art, play equipment, and landscaping will energize existing transportation corridors, the transit station area, and park properties. The town should look to local and regional artists, historic architecture, and innovative landscape design for inspiration. New developments should embrace public art and clear signage. The rural viewshed, pockets of in-town open space, and greenway corridors should be enhanced with appropriate landscaping, public art and signage.

- Encourage college-oriented art in public spaces and local arts events
- Work with local donors and grant organizations to implement the public art plan
- Ensure that public art is funded through local tax revenue
- Encourage art that promotes Davidson’s history and architecture
- Provide venues to display Davidson College student and faculty sculpture exhibits off campus
- Fund public art projects near the transit station, in local parks, and along pedestrian walkways
- Implement the Griffith Street landscape plan
- Implement sustainable landscape management techniques along greenways and rural roads

Goal 3: Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks and Greenways

Short-Term Recommendations: Local police officers and other town staff should focus on public education and enforcement initiatives to establish an environment where motorists, cyclists and pedestrians are expected to exercise caution and courtesy while sharing the roads. Planners should focus their efforts on identifying and prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects for future funding and revising design polices to ensure that all user groups can safely use local streets. Local and county agencies should continue to acquire land for future parks and greenways, and apply for grants to improve existing park facilities.

- Conduct an inventory of informal trails in the town and ETJ and incorporate into public network
- Create a bicycle and greenways network map
- Create a pedestrian access and mobility plan
- Clearly define greenways as off-road multi-use paths in the planning ordinance
- Consider revisions to guidelines to provide more senior-friendly streetscapes and public spaces

Ongoing Initiatives: Additional residential and commercial development will bring more visitors and residents, and the town should work diligently to build safer streets, parks and greenways. The town should ensure the proper bike and pedestrian facility design is considered during any resurfacing, restriping, or road repair projects. Neighborhood organizations should emphasize public safety by hosting outdoor social events and implementing creative traffic calming along busy streets. Police officers will become partners with neighborhood organizations to be more proactive in crime prevention. The town should also continue to maintain bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- Build off-road greenways, trails, and bike improvement projects per the bicycle master plan
- Establish regular cleaning and maintenance policies for bicycle facilities, sidewalks, greenways and streets
- Improve Fisher Farm’s visibility as a regional destination

Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities

Short-Term Recommendations: Parks should include the most innovative, sustainable and accessible park design features and amenities. Residents and elected officials need to balance active and passive recreational needs by considering growth pressure, impacts on the natural environment, and the increasingly diverse population. Policies should be developed for residents to become active participants in the design and improvement of publicly-owned parks.
• Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
• Update definitions of various park-types to require appropriate types of seating, trash receptacles, bike racks, lighting, public art, and landscaping
• Promote building community and urban gardens on public properties
• Incorporate community gardens in neighborhood/community park requirements
• Establish more shared facility/ball field agreements with private owners and schools

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Well-designed public gathering spaces and park facilities should be constructed, with priority given to the downtown followed by outlying neighborhoods and developments. Park design should respond to resident needs, and be informed by community surveys and demographic analysis. The management of public properties should also respond to the surrounding land use context and environmental concerns. As a variety of park facilities and recreation programs are established, Davidson will become a popular regional destination for ecologists and educators, outdoor enthusiasts, and sports competitors. The town should consider ways to maximize the economic opportunities of tourism while balancing that with the needs of local residents. Environmental advocates and youth clubs should embrace their role as stewards of natural parks by educating the public about natural resources, providing recreational programs and helping to maintain the facilities.

• Preserve in-town green spaces and corridors ideal for recreational play and neighborhood gathering spaces
• Ensure that every resident (within incorporated areas) is within ¼ mile of a public park and greenway access
• Create more nature preserves
• Balance active and passive parks and amenities
• Build multi-generational parks
• Build parks and community facilities that provide opportunities for local youth (middle and high school students)
• Provide more unstructured play or gathering spaces, especially in underserved neighborhoods
• Maintain Fisher Farm as a natural area with low impact park amenities
• Create learning laboratories for local students and residents at nature preserves
• Establish an Adopt a Park and/or Adopt a Greenway program
• Establish a regular volunteer maintenance schedule for local trails and neighborhood gathering spaces
• Maintain access and safety of local connections between neighborhoods and local parks

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Maintain the Downtown as a High-Quality Pedestrian Environment and Civic Center**
- Progress has been made on building the Carolina Thread Trail, improving signage for bicyclists and pedestrians, and supporting local events.
- A downtown parking plan for vehicles and bicycles has been created.

**Goal 2: Encourage New Public Art Placement and Gateway Signage**
- Progress has been made in increasing public art and landscaping to create a gateway into town and add to the character of town.
- Additional partnerships with Davidson College to display artwork by students and faculty throughout town could be created.

**Goal 3: Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks and Greenways**
- The Davidson Walks and Rolls Active Transportation Plan includes maps and plans for bicycle, greenway, and pedestrian access including looking at senior-friendly designs.
- The planning ordinance re-write and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan both look at defining greenways and incorporating this definition into the ordinance.
- Efforts to build off-road greenways, trails, and bike improvements have been made as funding becomes available.
- The Public Works Department frequently cleans and maintains public facilities including bicycle facilities, greenways, streets, and sidewalks.

**Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities**
- Progress has been made on park planning, increasing access to park land and programs, providing educational programs, and balancing active and passive amenities.
- Additional efforts on encouraging park and greenway ownership through volunteer programs are needed.
- Little to no progress has been made in incorporating urban gardens and multigenerational parks; however both of these topics are being discussed as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**
+ Track the use of parks and greenways through surveys, counts and observations
+ Increase the number of flexible use spaces in parks to keep up with changing trends
+ Develop a private/public partnership to provide additional seating areas, artwork, or pockets of activity throughout town
+ Consider “high risk areas” identified in the Davidson Walks and Rolls Active Transportation Plan Health Impact Assessment when prioritizing infrastructure improvements and park placement
+ Involve the surrounding neighborhoods in the park planning, revitalization, and maintenance process
+ Ensure the connectivity to parks by sidewalks, bike lanes, and greenways to surrounding neighborhoods and the larger community
+ Balance the need for larger parks for conservation and recreational programming with neighborhood or pocket parks throughout the community

**Livability Theme: Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services**

**Conditions and Concerns**
- Good working relationships with Mecklenburg County for environmental regulation, emergency management, parks and recreation, law enforcement, and water/ wastewater utilities
- Decentralized parks and recreation programs and activities
- Perceived demand for additional and more diverse recreation programs

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* All departments should strive to be recognized as leaders in their respective fields. As residents seek to achieve more sustainable and healthy lifestyles, town services should respond accordingly. The town should grow its portfolio of services by expanding existing and building new partnerships with affiliated agencies and service providers.
- Repair uneven gutters, pavement, potholes, and brush in the roadways, bikeways, and sidewalks
- Create a town staff position to oversee sustainability or livability initiatives
- Coordinate local parks and recreation activities with regional agencies, the Ada Jenkins Center, neighboring jurisdictions and Davidson College

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Town staff should continue to focus on sustainable services such as tree maintenance, code enforcement, tourism management, and active living programming. New services will require new equipment and personnel.
- Provide sufficient funds for park maintenance

**Progress**

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**
- A staff position has been hired to oversee sustainability and livability initiatives.
- Efforts to increase parks and recreation activities have been coordinated with regional agencies, Ada Jenkins Center, and neighboring jurisdictions to varying degrees.
- Repairs and maintenance of parks, roadways, bikeways, and sidewalks is ongoing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Additions or Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ Work with Davidson College to determine an off-season schedule where the public can use college resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Partner with neighborhood associations to address potential concerns about private/public use of facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Access to Healthy Foods

Health Impacts
- Improved nutrition
- Reduced prevalence of obesity
- Reduced incidence of hunger

Livability Themes
- Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use
- Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources
- Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles
- Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods
- Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities

Description of Component
Physical and fiscal access to healthy food options (fresh produce, lean meats, dairy products, whole grains, and healthy oils) can take many forms and is a critical component to maintaining a healthy weight. Additional benefits of healthy nutrition include: decreased risk of diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and stroke. Poor nutrition or lack of adequate nutrition has also been linked to hunger and learning difficulties. Providing access to full grocery stores, healthy corner stores, farmer’s markets, community gardens, agricultural cooperatives, and food banks can help increase healthy food consumption. Limiting the prevalence of unhealthy options such as fast food chains and alcohol outlets can also have a positive impact.²

Current Conditions (2014)

Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables

As part of the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, adults in Mecklenburg County were asked three questions related to fruits and vegetables consumption: 1). Have you consumed fruit one or more times per day? 2). Have you consumed vegetables one or more times per day? And, 3). Have you consumed fruits, vegetables, or beans five or more times per day?

- 54% consumed a fruit at least once a day
- 75% consumed a vegetable at least once a day
- 11% consumed fruits, vegetables, or beans five or more times a day⁹

Sugar Drinks

As part of the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, adults in Mecklenburg County were asked two questions related to drinks containing sugar: 1). About how often do you drink regular soda or pop that contains sugar? And, 2). During the past 30 days, how often did you drink sugar-sweetened fruit drinks (such as Kool-aid and lemonade), sweet tea, and sports or energy drinks (such as Gatorade and Red Bull)?

- 21% consumed one or more regular sodas daily, 27% weekly, 16% monthly, and 36% never consumed soda
• 14% consumed a sugar-sweetened beverage daily, 28% weekly, 22% monthly, 35% never consumed a sugar-sweetened beverage⁹

Sodium or Salt-Related Behavior

As part of the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, adults in Mecklenburg County were asked three questions related to sodium or salt intake: 1). Are you currently watching or reducing your sodium or salt intake? 2). How many days, weeks, months, or years have you been watching or reducing your sodium or salt intake? And, 3). Has a doctor or other health professional ever advised you to reduce sodium or salt intake?

• 55% are currently watching or reducing their sodium or salt intake
• Duration of time watching or reducing sodium intake is not available at the county level
• 23% have been informed by a health professional to reduce their sodium or salt intake⁹

Perceived Nutrition Environment

As part of the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, adults in Mecklenburg County were asked to what degree they would agree with the statement, “It is easy to purchase healthy foods in my neighborhood such as whole grain foods, low fat options, and fruits and vegetables.”

• 63% strongly agreed with the statement
• 28% agreed with the statement
• 9% either felt neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement⁹

Food Preparation

As part of the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, adults in Mecklenburg County were asked two questions related to food preparation: 1). How often in the past 12 months did you buy fruits or vegetables locally grown such as from a farmer’s market, CSA, roadside stand, or pick-your-own produce farm? And, 2). How many times in a typical week do members of your household eat a main meal together that was prepared at home?

• 16% at least once a week buy locally grown fruits and vegetables, 12% at least once a month, 22% a few times per year, or 50% never buy locally grown fruits and vegetables
• 19% said 1-2 days a week, 14% said 3-4 days, 19% said 5-6 days, 39% said every day, and 9.3% said they never eat a main meal together that was prepared at home⁹

Actions to Control Weight

As part of the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, adults in Mecklenburg County were asked: which of the following are you trying to do about your weight?

• 50% were trying to lose weight, 27% were trying to maintain their weight, and 17% were doing nothing about weight⁹
Map 16: Grocery and Multipurpose Stores Around Davidson
**Number and Location of Grocery Stores**

Davidson has one full grocery store— a Harris Teeter located at 431 Peninsula Dr. near the Circles at 30. There is also the Healthy Home Market located at 261 Griffith St. and specializing in locally grown and specialty foods. Davidson is not considered a food desert defined as a “geographic region where affordable and nutritious food is difficult to obtain, particularly for those without access to an automobile.” In addition to Harris Teeter, there are a large number of grocery stores and multipurpose stores (Walmart, Target, etc.) within 10 miles of Davidson (see Map 16).

**Average Basket Price**

A study of food pricing was done to determine fiscal access to the different grocery and multipurpose stores. As part of this fiscal analysis, a basket price study was done for the following items: red delicious apples, navel oranges, bananas, baby carrots, lettuce, cucumber, 1% milk, low-fat yogurt, sliced American cheese, 95% lean beef, lean hot dogs, eggs, sliced wheat and white bread. These items were selected after reviewing similar studies and with the goal of determining if healthy options for fresh produce, lean sources of protein, high-fiber carbohydrates, and low-fat dairy options were available at each store and for what price (see Tables 9-10).

The average basket price for the stores shown below was $35.13 and the range between the lowest store and the highest store was $40.57. With a total basket price of $20.84, Aldi’s was the least expensive store. With a total basket price of $61.41, the Healthy Home Market was the most expensive store (see Tables 9-10).

**Table 9: Basket Price for 10 Local Grocery and Multipurpose Stores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aldi</th>
<th>Walmart</th>
<th>Food Lion</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Harris Teeter</th>
<th>Publix</th>
<th>Lowes Foods</th>
<th>Fresh Market</th>
<th>Earth Fare</th>
<th>Healthy Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Delicious Apples</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$0.98</td>
<td>$1.29</td>
<td>$0.79</td>
<td>$1.79</td>
<td>$1.79</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$1.98</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navel Oranges</td>
<td>$0.82</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>$2.03</td>
<td>$2.32</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$1.48</td>
<td>$1.28</td>
<td>$2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>$0.44</td>
<td>$0.52</td>
<td>$0.58</td>
<td>$0.73</td>
<td>$0.65</td>
<td>$0.65</td>
<td>$0.69</td>
<td>$0.69</td>
<td>$0.65</td>
<td>$0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Carrots</td>
<td>$0.99</td>
<td>$1.48</td>
<td>$1.40</td>
<td>$2.39</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$0.97</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Lettuce</td>
<td>$1.19</td>
<td>$1.48</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
<td>$1.67</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
<td>$1.49</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
<td>$2.49</td>
<td>$2.99</td>
<td>$2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td>$0.49</td>
<td>$0.68</td>
<td>$0.69</td>
<td>$0.69</td>
<td>$0.89</td>
<td>$0.74</td>
<td>$0.99</td>
<td>$1.29</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dairy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% Milk</td>
<td>$2.88</td>
<td>$2.98</td>
<td>$3.95</td>
<td>$3.59</td>
<td>$3.99</td>
<td>$3.79</td>
<td>$3.99</td>
<td>$4.29</td>
<td>$4.28</td>
<td>$6.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain, Low-fat Yogurt</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
<td>$2.48</td>
<td>$2.47</td>
<td>$2.49</td>
<td>$1.67</td>
<td>$2.87</td>
<td>$2.99</td>
<td>$3.39</td>
<td>$3.68</td>
<td>$3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced American Cheese</td>
<td>$0.99</td>
<td>$2.28</td>
<td>$0.99</td>
<td>$2.09</td>
<td>$1.97</td>
<td>$3.49</td>
<td>$2.46</td>
<td>$7.05</td>
<td>$5.97</td>
<td>$7.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protein</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzen White Eggs</td>
<td>$1.09</td>
<td>$1.18</td>
<td>$1.45</td>
<td>$1.79</td>
<td>$1.45</td>
<td>$1.79</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$2.99</td>
<td>$2.67</td>
<td>$3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bread</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced Wheat</td>
<td>$0.99</td>
<td>$1.58</td>
<td>$1.89</td>
<td>$1.59</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$1.89</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$3.79</td>
<td>$4.79</td>
<td>$6.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced White</td>
<td>$0.89</td>
<td>$1.38</td>
<td>$0.97</td>
<td>$1.59</td>
<td>$0.97</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$1.39</td>
<td>$3.49</td>
<td>$4.79</td>
<td>$4.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Basket Price</strong></td>
<td>$20.84</td>
<td>$29.49</td>
<td>$30.37</td>
<td>$32.54</td>
<td>$33.23</td>
<td>$36.15</td>
<td>$39.14</td>
<td>$44.91</td>
<td>$49.54</td>
<td>$61.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10: Average Price and Range of Prices for Healthy Food Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Price</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Delicious Apples</td>
<td>$ 1.51</td>
<td>$ 3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navel Oranges</td>
<td>$ 1.94</td>
<td>$ 2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>$ 0.62</td>
<td>$ 0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Carrots</td>
<td>$ 1.51</td>
<td>$ 1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Lettuce</td>
<td>$ 1.82</td>
<td>$ 1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td>$ 0.83</td>
<td>$ 1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dairy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% Milk</td>
<td>$ 3.75</td>
<td>$ 4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain, Low-fat yogurt</td>
<td>$ 2.64</td>
<td>$ 2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced American Cheese</td>
<td>$ 3.03</td>
<td>$ 6.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protein</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95% Lean Beef</td>
<td>$ 6.26</td>
<td>$ 2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean Hot Dogs</td>
<td>$ 5.19</td>
<td>$ 4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dozen White Eggs</td>
<td>$ 1.82</td>
<td>$ 2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bread</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced Wheat</td>
<td>$ 2.28</td>
<td>$ 5.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliced White</td>
<td>$ 1.94</td>
<td>$ 4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Basket Price</strong></td>
<td>$ 35.13</td>
<td>$ 40.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Corner Stores/ Gas Station Stores**

There are two gas stations in Davidson— Rushco Liberty located at 644 Davidson Gateway and Exxon located at 601 Griffith St. The Ruscho store has a deli section offering sandwiches, fruits, vegetables, and salads. The Exxon station has some healthy options including a small stand of bananas and apples at checkout and gallons of 2% milk. The prices for these items are slightly higher than at the grocery store, which is to be expected for the added convenience.

**Farmer’s Market**

The Davidson Farmer’s Market (DFM) is a producer-only, year-round market featuring more than 35 farmers and local producers from within a 100 mile radius (see Table 11). It is a 501 c3 non-profit, led by a board of directors with the mission “to sponsor a weekly farmer’s market in Davidson which provides locally grown food, educates the public about nutrition and the importance of eating locally grown foods and offers musical entertainment, special events and cooking and other demonstrations to create a community festival for the Town.” DFM’s goal is to create a vibrant community
gathering place with locally grown agricultural and horticultural products and family-friendly educational, musical and entertainment activities.

The market is open weekly April through October from 8AM to 12 PM and bi-monthly November through March, 9AM to 12PM. Products available at the market include: fruits, vegetables, meats, cheeses, breads, eggs, honey, flowers, pastas, and ready-to-eat foods. Additional programs that the market supports include: Growing Kids Club, World of Wonder, Master Gardener, Master Composter, and Gleaning at the Market. The market also has a program that allows vendors to accept EBT/ SNAP cards and is working on providing extra tokens to increase the buying-power of low-income individuals.15

Table 11: Vendors at the Davidson Farmer’s Market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audrey’s Produce- Audrey Miller</td>
<td>Mt. Laurel, NC</td>
<td>Apples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbee Farms- Brent, Tommy, and Anna Barbee</td>
<td>Concord, NC</td>
<td>Tomatoes, peaches, other seasonal and green house produce (over 150 varieties)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty’s Blooms- Betty Brown</td>
<td>Davidson, NC</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverly’s Gourmet Foods- Beverly McLaughlin</td>
<td>Charlotte, NC</td>
<td>Prepared foods- vegan and gluten-free dishes, tomato pies, breakfast casseroles, tofu entrees, pasta dishes, soups, dips, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Oak Farm- Mike Smith</td>
<td>Denver, NC</td>
<td>All natural beef and pork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;O Farms- Tom Hanks and Seth Ross</td>
<td>Hickory, NC</td>
<td>Blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, homemade jams, farm fresh eggs and hand-blown glass jewelry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cackleberry Farm-Randy Fisher</td>
<td>Concord, NC</td>
<td>Cow’s milk cheeses, butter, yogurt, sour cream, buttermilk, and free range eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calico Farmstead Cheese, LLC- Jackie and Larry Gerringer, Anna G. Amoreill, June Gerringer-Deatherage</td>
<td>Gibsonville, NC</td>
<td>Fresh and aged farmstead cows’ milk cheeses, goat cheeses, and farm fresh eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chef Charles Catering- Charles Semail</td>
<td>Charlotte &amp; Davidson, NC</td>
<td>Barbeque, pate, sausages, baguettes, brioche, soups, spreads, and frozen entrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cj’s Paw-Some Pastries- Cindy and Jennifer</td>
<td>Huntersville, NC</td>
<td>Dog treats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coldwater Creek Farms- Brad Hinckley and Eric Williamson</td>
<td>Kannapolis, NC</td>
<td>Naturally grown produce, flowers, and vegetable plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Farms- Jane Henderson</td>
<td>Concord, NC</td>
<td>Organically grown and sustainable flowers, herbs, and vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correll Farm- David and Cheryl, Sam and Gloria Correll</td>
<td>Cleveland, NC</td>
<td>Fruits and vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of Eden- Jonathan and Jan Bostic</td>
<td>Huntersville, NC</td>
<td>Heritage turkey, eggs and fresh dog food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm- Doug Crawford and Lynn MacDougall-Fleming</td>
<td>Cabarrus County, NC</td>
<td>Certified Organic produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empanadas 2 Go- Eduardo Dorta and Mimi Chalita</td>
<td>Cornelius, NC</td>
<td>Handmade, frozen empanadas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Soaps- Linda Alley and Phyllis Rollins</td>
<td>Charlotte, NC</td>
<td>Soaps, oils, lotions, lip balm and other natural skin care products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiddlers Vineyard- Mark and Sherry Crowder</td>
<td>Cherryville, NC</td>
<td>Homegrown Muscadine, Scuppernong and fruit wines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Fish Seafood- David and Peggy Meeks</td>
<td>Davidson, NC</td>
<td>North Carolina seafood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilcrest Natural Farm- Gil and Amy Foster</td>
<td>Iron Station, NC</td>
<td>Pasture raised chicken, beef, free-range eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenthumb Gardens- Lynn MacDougal-Fleming</td>
<td>Concord, NC</td>
<td>Organic vegetables and herbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Moon Gardens- Patrick Poitras and Trisha Raglin</td>
<td>Mooresville, NC</td>
<td>Herb plants, perennials, and handmade soaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry’s Wholesome Foods- Henry and Rita Imhoff</td>
<td>Cleveland, NC</td>
<td>Bread, cookies, cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, pies, blueberries, tomatoes, and summer produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herr’s Fresh Flowers- Jefferson Herr</td>
<td>Vale, NC</td>
<td>Flower arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Farm LLC- Bobby and Patsy Houston</td>
<td>Huntersville, NC</td>
<td>Seasonal produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KC Farms- Chris and Kristi Goodrum</td>
<td>Mt. Mourn, NC</td>
<td>Seasonal produce and baked goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of Pops- Neil Ringer</td>
<td>Charlotte, NC</td>
<td>Icy pops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavender Garden- Rita Rodelli</td>
<td>China Grove, NC</td>
<td>Fresh lavender stems, wands, sachets, soaps, and bath products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millstone Meadows Farm- Sara and Mark Hord</td>
<td>Morganton, NC</td>
<td>Breads, tarts, cookies, croissants, prepared foods, and lamb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood Indigo Soaps- Rea Wright</td>
<td>Davidson, NC</td>
<td>Soaps, body butters, scrubs, lip balms, perfume oils and accessories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches and Cream- Calvin Phillips</td>
<td>Wadesboro, NC</td>
<td>Peaches, strawberries and blackberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen of Oats- Kelli Swick</td>
<td>Cornelius, NC</td>
<td>Granola, granola brittle, and breakfast cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renn Bee Farm- Marcel Renn</td>
<td>Salisbury, NC</td>
<td>Honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahtein- Courtney and Mitch Abraham</td>
<td>Mooresville, NC</td>
<td>Lebanese foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Homegrown Crepe Food Truck-Matt Alexander</td>
<td>Mooresville, NC</td>
<td>Sweet and savory crepes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twin Oaks Farm- Greg Hartsell and Tim Sloop</td>
<td>China Grove, NC</td>
<td>Produce, flowers, and vegetable plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Turkey Farms- Lee Menius</td>
<td>China Grove, NC</td>
<td>Pork, beef, eggs, chicken, turkey, lamb and fresh eggs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community Gardens**

The Davidson Community Garden was established by Davidson United Methodist Church in 2010 for the use and enjoyment of the entire town. It is one big garden (0.2 acres) tended by volunteers and envisioned as a gathering place to enjoy new friends, learn new skills, and grow healthy food. The garden is located on Potts St. just west of the railroad tracks and behind the Wachovia drive-through near Fuel Pizza.16

Maintenance of the garden is provided by 12 crews with each crew consisting of 8-12 people from community organizations, schools, churches, and interested families (approximately 200 volunteers). Every crew serves 3 weeks out
of the 8 month growing period. The community garden is an all-season, organic garden, using no pesticides or chemicals of any kind. The produce is grown in raised beds with flowers around the edges and a row of raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries. Plants and funding are provided by Davidson United Methodist Church, Brawley Nursery, Ace Hardware, and Jail North.

Every evening food is delivered to Ada Jenkins’ Loaves and Fishes program to provide families and individuals in need with fresh produce (approximately 2,000 pounds of food each year). Gleaning is also welcomed at the garden with the motto of “tend some, take some, share a lot.” Education initiatives around the garden include composting, rain barrels, crop rotation, saving seeds, and the best selections for spring, summer, and fall crops. Funds for the garden are raised by selling herbs and produce to local restaurants, grants, and individual donations. For more information, contact Connie or Eddie Beach at Beachclub@mi-connection.com.

Seeds Community Garden at St. Alban’s started in 2009 when parishioners who enjoyed gardening joined forces to repurpose a pipeline right-of-way adjacent to St. Alban’s into a 120 square foot community garden complete with 52 garden beds with fruits, vegetables, and flowers. There is also a couple of bee hives, composting pile, and a meditation garden. Each of the spaces in the community garden is rented out by 48 families for the cost of $80 per year to cover water and maintenance costs for the garden and organic practices are used. At least 10% of the garden’s produce (approximately 75 to 100 pounds) is contributed to Ada Jenkins’ Loaves and Fishes program. The garden is located within the St. Alban’s neighborhood off of Davidson Concord Road, next to St. Alban’s Episcopal Church. For more information, contact Amanda Miller at a.troffermill@yahoo.com.¹⁷

Food Pantries

Loaves and Fishes, operating out of Ada Jenkins, serves the residents of Davidson, Huntersville, Cornelius, and South Iredell (Mooresville and Troutman). Clients shop grocery style according to a list provided by the program and volunteers are available to help participants in selecting their food. A referral from a church pastor, school counselor, program staff or a representative of the Department of Social Services, the Salvation Army, or Goodwill is needed to participate and clients are eligible to participate once every 45 days. The pantry is open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 12:30 to 3:30 PM and the second Saturday of every month from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM.¹⁸

Cooking/Freezing/Canning

In the past, classes on cooking and cooking demonstrations have been provided by Wooden Stone, Carolina Healthcare Systems, and Davidson Farmer’s Market. Davidson Parks and Recreation have also partnered with area restaurants to provide cooking classes and summer camps for youth. The Mecklenburg County Family and Consumers Sciences program out of the NC Cooperative Extension has offered a series (May-August) of classes on home food preservation methods including canning and freezing food safely.¹⁹

School Gardens

The Green Teacher Network (GTN) is a nonprofit organization with the mission “to establish and facilitate a collaboration of educators throughout the Charlotte region through quarterly workshops and other initiatives to share information, network and collaborate to enhance hands-on learning, supporting local foods, and expanding current health and wellness initiatives through school-based gardening.” GTN’s accomplishments to date include: holding quarterly workshops, establishing a partner network, assembling a database of “green” teachers, and developing a website to house resources, information on partners, funding ideas, and curriculum connections with gardening. More information and a list of school gardens within the region can be found at http://gtncharlotte.org.²⁰
Davidson Elementary School has had a school garden for a few years now as part of a Field to Fork grant in partnership with Fuel Pizza. Students grew tomatoes, peppers, blueberries, cabbage, lettuce, and strawberries. Once the ingredients are harvested, students get to take them over to Fuel Pizza where they are prepared as part of a pizza or salad and served to students. Twenty to twenty-four third graders are involved in the project annually and the garden is tied into teaching about the plants, soil, and healthy habits.

Community School of Davidson started a school garden in 2008 with the 8th graders as part of their Friday practicum. The practicum consists of 10 students, is required, and rotates every three weeks so all 105 students get a chance in the garden during different seasons. Students have the opportunity to grow and taste kale, watermelon, carrots, broccoli, potatoes, cauliflower, peas, beets, lettuce, strawberries, eggplants, chives, pepper, basil, and tomatoes. The garden is supported through sales from the garden (seeds, bulbs, produce, flowers, etc.) and through donations from the community and parents. During the summer months the garden is tended by volunteers and the garden has had a couple of workdays put together by churches and community groups. Long-term goals for the garden include partnering with others to sell produce from the garden and to keep the garden going during the summer months when school is out, adding fruit trees and stepping stones, treating the garden for fire ants, and adding more vertical elements to the garden to take advantage of limited space.

**Active Farms/ Farmland Preservation**

Mecklenburg County has 237 farms with the majority of these farms being small family farms (less than $250,000 in gross sales). The majority of the region’s farms grow crops like hay, grain, or produce animals like cattle that are subsequently sold outside the region to be raised. Only 4.8% of farms within the region produce fruits and vegetables.\(^{21}\)

In and around Davidson, there is Blue Bird Farms located in the northeastern corner and occupying part of Mecklenburg and Iredell County. This 135-acre property features agricultural land, open fields, wetlands, hardwood forests, and 5 acres dedicated specifically to waterfowl habitat. The Catawba Lands Conservancy has had a conservation easement on this property since December 2003.\(^{22}\)

The Clark Property is located just south of Davidson Concord Road and features 57 acres of forests, open fields, and rock outcrops along Ramah Creek. The Catawba Lands Conservancy has had a conservation easement on this property since December 2000.
Table 12: Existing Language, Progress, and Suggested Additions or Changes for Access to Healthy Food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditions and Concerns</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grassroot leadership in community gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong support for Davidson Farmers Market and local farming industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Relatively health-conscious population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals and Recommendations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *Short-Term Recommendations:* As residents become more interested in sustainable living, local government and environmental advocacy groups should work with residents and business owners to reduce landfill waste. Increasing participation in recycling and promoting on-site composting are two initial steps to accomplish this goal.  
  • Offer reduced-priced compost bins at the farmers market  
  • Promote on-site composting as an alternative to leaf collection |
| *Ongoing Initiatives:* As individual property owners and residents become more engaged in waste reduction programs, larger business-owners and new industries should be encouraged to reduce solid waste.  
  • Continue to work with Mecklenburg County to implement the recommendations in the Solid Waste Management Plan  
  • Create waste-to-energy loops between local and regional businesses  
  • Expand capacity for processing food waste through larger-scale composting  
  • Encourage use of recycled and recyclable products |
| **Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods** |
| *Short-Term Recommendations:* Davidson should focus on providing easy and affordable access to local or regional food sources. Open space within the town limits are opportunities for community gardening and sustainable land management. Land development policies should be evaluated for how well they support agriculture and food production.  
  • Establish partnerships with Davidson College, state agencies, and health professionals to encourage healthy lifestyle choices  
  • Encourage homeowners associations to create community gardens in common open space  
  • Encourage urban food production and pocket gardens on public property  
  • Inventory existing farms in the rural area  
  • Participate in food planning on state and regional level  
  • Define and permit appropriate agricultural uses in most planning areas  
  • Create a local food plan |
| *Ongoing Initiatives:* Davidson should consider ways to ensure the success of the Davidson Farmer’s Market and other local agricultural distribution networks. The Rural Planning Area should be promoted as a prime location for small to medium-sized working farms.  
  • Secure land for community farming in the rural area  
  • Encourage organic farming and animal husbandry in the Rural Planning Area and other undeveloped areas of the ETJ  
  • Encourage agricultural use of open space land in residential subdivisions  
  • Minimize negative ecological impacts of agricultural and food production activities  
  • Provide a permanent covered structure for the Davidson Farmer’s Market  
  • Create financial assistance programs that make local food more affordable to low-income residents  
  • Require new development proposals to assess impacts on surrounding active farms and protected open space |
Progress

Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste
- Initial efforts to promote composting and recycling have been made including offering reduced-priced bins at the farmers market, putting new combined recycling bins and trashcans around downtown, and providing large recycling bins for homes.
- Additional large-scale and creative composting and recycling efforts with businesses is still needed.

Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods
- Progress has been made in promoting organic agriculture practices in the Rural Planning Area and permitting agricultural processes in most planning areas including allowing chickens, gardens, and beehives in most circumstances with certain restrictions to avoid public nuisances.
- A local food systems plan is being worked on as part of the Food Systems Plan Health Impact Assessment and will include an inventory of active farms and recommendations for increasing urban agriculture practices and access to local food for all income levels.
- Limited progress has been made in providing areas for large-scale community farming or community gardens within subdivisions.
- Forming additional partnerships and participating in area food policy councils has been limited to date but will be crucial in moving forward with developing the Food System Plan.

Suggested Additions or Changes
+ Additional education and demonstration projects with composting and gardening for residents
+ Additional efforts to protect and market active farms as part of a historic agricultural district
+ Provide coordination and support for the creation of community gardens including the use of vacant property, appropriate parkland, utilities, tools, compost, materials, etc. when applicable
+ Consider the appropriate means to increase access to affordable, local foods for low-income populations including: mobile markets, bonus bucks at the farmer's market, healthy options at corner stores, stands at transit stops, increased fresh produce at food pantries and soup kitchens, neighborhood gardens or potted starter gardens, nutrition and gardening education, etc.

Livability Theme: Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources

Conditions and Concerns
- Vast natural resources and agricultural land in rural area
- Significant pressure on local farmers to develop property
- Interest in preserving the town’s historic fabric

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space
Short-Term Recommendations: An open space plan should describe priority natural areas for preservation and enhancement. Policies should be reevaluated to preserve well-connected and quality habitats, significant farmland, and accessible park areas.
- Create a new Open Space Plan
- Use the Natural Assets Inventory as a decision-making tool for open space preservation
- Evaluate public perceptions, definitions and value of various types of open space

Ongoing Initiatives: The Town of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, and local conservation organizations should allocate funding toward the purchase of open space property. However, it is anticipated that most open space will be acquired through development and conservation easements.
- Encourage the Davidson Lands Conservancy (DLC) to secure more conservation easements
- Create succession and management plans for protected property
- Protect migration corridors and preserve open space across property lines
- Identify significant natural open space in the downtown and Village Infill Planning Area
- Preserve most of the undeveloped rural area
- Work with neighboring jurisdictions to preserve contiguous and valuable open space
- Protect viewsheds along greenways and roads in rural area
- Recognize the evolutionary nature of open space
- Reward open space stewardship
- Continue to require open space preservation as part of development in the rural area
- Monitor and minimize development impacts on significant ecosystems

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space**

- Open space preservation requirements are part of the development process in the rural area and a new open space plan is expected as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Additional efforts towards long-term planning for open space conservation and the protection of rural properties (including active farms and the development of community farms) is needed.
- Monitoring impacts of development and tracking progress on goals to protect the rural planning area is limited and farmland should be considered both for its impacts on other ecosystems and as an ecosystem needing protection.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

+ Include active farms within the definitions of open space and viewsheds that should be protected
+ Include community or neighborhood gardens as part of open space in downtown and Village Infill Planning Area
+ Work with Davidson Lands Conservancy and other partners to increase conservation easements on active farms
+ Include prime farmland as part of the Natural Assets Inventory
+ Connect community gardens, farms, and parks via bicycling, walking, and transit networks
+ Monitor and manage the impacts of development on the rural area and existing and potential farmland

**Livability Theme: Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Restrictions against extending rural sewer lines has limited rural residential growth
- Low-density residential development potential in the rural area
- Inconsistent design standards between franchise and corporate prototypes and context sensitive design
- Perception that development approval process is inefficient
- Strong commitment to design review

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town should update ordinances for the Rural Planning Area to encourage cluster development and rural viewshed preservation. New road connections or improvements should be carefully planned to minimize negative impact on sensitive natural assets, active farmland, and anticipated land use development.

- Reevaluate the alignment of planned roads in the rural area
- Create scenic overlay district ordinance along rural roads
- Consider rezoning rural properties to current use
- Create design guidelines for the Rural Planning Area
- Consider ways to make farmhouse cluster and conservation subdivisions viable options in the rural area
- Investigate agriburbs (farm-centered neighborhoods) and co-housing as possible options for rural subdivision models

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The town should consider best practices for well-timed annexation and utility extensions in the rural area. The town should also work with state and regional agencies to provide incentives to rural property owners and farmers to continue agricultural activities. Development centers should have distinct edges, but intensities and land uses should transition from the urban core to agricultural and natural settings.

- Develop an annexation plan
- Research and implement appropriate applications of urban growth boundaries and transfer of development rights
- Discourage moderate density and dispersed development in the rural area
- Preserve active farmland
- Continue to control future sewer extensions in the rural area
- Increase road connectivity in developed areas in order to minimize the need for new rural roads

**Progress**

**Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape**
- Progress has been made on considering creative development patterns for housing in the rural area including agriburbs and cluster subdivisions but no design guidelines or examples exist.
- Additional work towards increasing road connectivity, creating a scenic overlay district, developing an annexation plan, and researching other growth management mechanisms is needed.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**
+ Expand the goal of preserve active farmland to include means of doing so such as establishing a historic agriculture district, limiting development in the rural area, and working with farmers to include them in community activities such as the farmers market, food pantry, volunteer support, co-operative efforts, public education, etc.
+ Define what is considered an active farm and evaluate the support systems needed by farmers to continue to farm their property
+ Make protecting and marketing Davidson’s agricultural heritage a goal

### Livability Theme: Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods

**Conditions and Concerns**
- Lack of public community and neighborhood gathering places
- Limited funding sources for public art and landscape enhancements
- Increasing inventory of undeveloped town or county owned properties

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Parks should include the most innovative, sustainable and accessible park design features and amenities. Residents and elected officials need to balance active and passive recreational needs by considering growth pressure, impacts on the natural environment, and the increasingly diverse population. Policies should be developed for residents to become active participants in the design and improvement of publicly-owned properties.

- Promote building community and urban gardens on public properties
- Incorporate community gardens in neighborhood/community park requirements

**Progress**

**Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities**
- No progress has been made

### Suggested Additions or Changes
- Include produce stands next to community gardens as an acceptable use of parkland and public property
- Include demonstration gardens (vegetable, stormwater management, and flower) and composting as part of plans for parkland around the Parks and Recreation Department and potentially portions of Abersham and Fisher Farm park plans
- Include a community kitchen including a place to do cooking and canning demonstrations as part of park plans

### Livability Theme: Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities

#### Conditions and Concerns
- Much of the town’s potential spending power is “leaking” outside Davidson’s boundaries
- No collective strategy for increasing local economic growth
- Insufficient amount of office, retail, lodging, residential and entertainment venues in downtown to attract regional tourism market and diverse population
- Limited water and sewer availability in south Iredell County
- Lack of in-town job opportunities, especially for low-income residents

#### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 2: Encourage Economic Growth that Supports Local Assets and Policies**

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The downtown should be promoted as a regional tourism destination. Greenfield mixed use or commercial centers, north of downtown and along NC 73, will continue to build-out. Davidson will be well positioned to support businesses of all sizes and industry types. Economic development should provide a full range of local employment opportunities for residents.
- Promote local farms and food markets as agri-tourism

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Davidson should work with regional, state and federal agencies to create “green jobs” through new incentives and policies. The town should also prepare for future industries by starting small with pilot projects, new policies, incubators and marketing.
- Adopt economic incentives and land use policies that encourage agricultural use of farmland

*Ongoing Initiatives:* As economic opportunities in Davidson increase, the residential population will become diverse and require a variety of employment choices. The town should encourage business owners to be strong community partners and environmental stewards. New employment centers will build on sites along major highways.
- Provide jobs for a variety of skill-sets, including disabled persons and low-income residents
- Recruit bio-technology, medical, and social research firms

#### Progress

**Goal 2: Encourage Economic Growth that Supports Local Assets and Policies**
- Progress has been made in marketing the farmer’s market including a mural near the farmer’s market and inclusion of the market on the Explore Davidson website.

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**
- No additional economic incentives or land use policies to encourage agricultural use of farmland have been made at the local level.
- Some progress has been made in offering a variety of jobs for different skill sets but additional efforts in community farming could assist with increased opportunities to those with entry-level skills and/or disabilities.
- Recruiting additional bio-technology firms could assist with studying and producing different bio-engineered seeds and boost production- no efforts have been made to recruit this type of firm.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

- Develop a community gardening complex complete with garden plots, a community kitchen, education center and offices, produce stands, compost pile, and sheds for storing tools etc.
- Partner with the Davidson Farmers Market to offer value added products from the community gardening complex and economic opportunities for low-income individuals, youth, and those with disabilities
## Access to Medical and Emergency Care Services

### Health Impacts
- Better preventive care
- Improved treatment of disease
- Quicker response time for emergency treatment

### Livability Themes
- Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services
- Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities
- Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity
- Encourage Committed Civic Involvement and Responsibility
- Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use

### Description of Component

A healthy community must have high quality, affordable medical services to prevent and treat disease. The location, affordability, and variety of medical services provided (hospitals, primary care offices, specialists, dentists, psychologists/ counseling, urgent care centers and clinics) often determine whether or not people receive the medical attention they need. Having affordable health centers located along transit lines or offering shuttle services can increase access to medical care for those who are unable to drive or cannot afford to own a car. The availability, quality, and response time of emergency services including fire, EMS, police, and social services can also reduce the likelihood of death or life-altering injuries occurring as a result of accidents, acts of violence, or neglect. ²

### Current Conditions (2014)

#### Major Hospitals

Major hospitals serving this region include Carolinas Healthcare System which operates the Davidson Clinic and the Davidson Behavioral Center and Novant Health which has a urgent care center and offices on Gilead Road and a family health center on Sam Furr Rd. in Huntersville (see Map 17).

#### Doctors’ Offices

Davidson currently has the following doctors and medical offices:

##### General/ Family Practitioners

- Baybridge Management- 215 S. Main Street, Suite 201, Davidson, (704) 896-9830
- Davidson Clinic- 705 Griffith St., Suite 100, Davidson, (704) 801-7900
- Davidson Family Medicine- 104 Knox Court, Suite 100, (704) 892-5454
- Davidson Health Associates- 428-D South Main Street, Davidson, (704) 655-0700
Dentists

- Brian Seese Family Dentistry- 610 Jetton St., Suite 250, Davidson, (704) 895-5095
- Charlotte Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics- 130 Harbour Place, Suite 180, Davidson, (704) 896-8100
- Dr. Dennis Coleman- 460 South Main, 100 Building, Suite 101, Davidson, (704) 896-5850
- Dr. Ben Yarborough-460 South Main, 100 Building, Suite 102, Davidson, (704) 892-6602
- Dr. John Allen- 460 South Main, 100 Building, Suite 103, Davidson, (704) 892-0655
- Dr. Michael B. Wilhite- 209 Delburg St., Suite 130, Davidson, (704) 987-2277
- Dr. Paul R. Gibbs- 460 South Main, 300 Building, Suite 301, Davidson, (704) 892-0644

Specialty

- Davidson Prosthetics & Orthotics Inc.- 428- D South Main St., Davidson, (704) 332-5143
- Select Physical Therapy- 705 Griffith Street, Suite 206, Davidson, (704) 894-0166
- Moliver Chiropractic- 624 Jetton Street, Suite 260, Davidson (704) 896-3435
- University Eye Associates- 455 South Main Street, #100, (704) 896-9090
- Hospice Lake Norman-705 Griffith Street, Suite 203, Davidson, (704) 375-0100

Minute Clinics/ Urgent Care

Davidson Clinic located on 705 Griffith St. is an urgent care center operated by Carolinas Healthcare System open Monday through Friday 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. and Saturday 9 A.M. to 12 P.M. CVS also recently opened a Minute Clinic at their locations of 127 S Main St. in Davidson, 7920 Sam Furr Rd. in Huntersville, and 599 River Highway in Mooresville. The Minute Clinic is open 8:30 A.M. to 7:30 P.M. Monday through Friday, Saturday 9:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. and Sunday 10:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. FastMed and Lake Norman Urgent Care are also available in Mooresville and Carolinas Urgent Care in Huntersville.

Officers on Police Force for Davidson/ Certifications

A full roster for the Davidson Police Department includes 18 full-time positions and 2 part-time positions: the chief of police, an administration sergeant and two patrol sergeants, four corporals, eight police officers, one detective, one records clerk, one receptionist, and one code enforcement officer. The Davidson Police has been awarded Recognition Status from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) in 2011 and in 2014, which is extremely rare for an agency of its size.

Call Statistics for Davidson

In 2013, the Davidson Police Department responded to close to 13,000 phone calls (1,834 Citizen Initiated Calls, 3,471 Officer Initiated Calls, and 7,610 Zone Checks). The average time per call for a Citizen Initiated Call was 62 minutes, with Officer Initiated Calls and Zone Checks being significantly less (30 minutes and 9 minutes). The cost per minute of service equaled $15/minute according to the police FY14 budget.

Crime Statistics for Davidson

According to the 2011 Uniform Crime Reports, there were 8 violent crimes in Davidson (4 for robbery and 4 aggravated assaults). There were also 107 property crimes including: 19 burglaries, 85 larceny thefts, and 3 motor vehicle thefts. Additional trend data and more recent statistics should be available from the Police Department prior to updating the Comprehensive Plan (see Maps 18-19).
Map 17: Medical Facilities Around Davidson
Map 18: First Quarter Crime Statistics 2014 for Davidson

Map 19: Second Quarter Crime Statistics 2014 for Davidson
The Davidson Fire Department has 59 members who work “paid on-call” meaning everyone on the roster is a town employee and is paid for hours worked and training hours. Of the 59 members, 50 are North Carolina certified EMT’s and the department is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with a minimum of 4 people on-call at all times. The average response time in 2013 was 5 minutes and 31 seconds from the 911 call being received to the first truck arriving on the scene. In 2013, the department responded to 44 fires including structural, vehicle, grass, woods, and other fire related incidents.

Davidson Fire Department has automatic aid agreements with Cornelius, Mount Mourne, and Odell Fire Departments. Cornelius responds to every structural related call in the North Star Fire District while Mount Mourne and Odell respond depending on location of the fire. Occasional assistance is also provided by the Huntersville Fire Department in a situation of mutual aid response. These services are reciprocated by Davidson depending on the situation.

**Vial of Life Program**

The Vial of Life Program is free to all residents and provides emergency responders and medical staff with accurate and current medical information. Basically it is a form that the participant completes and places in a clear envelope or bag and either attaches it to their refrigerator or places it within the refrigerator. Emergency responders are alerted to your participation in the program through a window decal located on or near the most frequently used door. The program has been extended beyond the home by carrying a keychain with the vial of life emblem and keeping a copy of the form in your glove box, purse, pocket, or bag. This program is made possible through a partnership with the Police Department, Fire Department, the Davidson Committee on Aging, Carolinas Healthcare System, and CVS Pharmacy. Contact Leslie Willis at lwillis@townofdavidson.org for more information or to schedule an informational presentation.
Table 13: Existing Language, Progress, and Suggested Additions or Changes for Access to Medical and Emergency Care Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livability Theme: Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditions and Concerns</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Good working relationships with Mecklenburg County for environmental regulation, emergency management, parks and recreation, law enforcement, and waste/ wastewater utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Immediate need for a second fire station to serve residential growth</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals and Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 2: Provide Adequate Fire, Police and Emergency Service in All Incorporated Areas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Short-Term Recommendations:</em> As the second fire station is built in the NC 73 area, it will require additional staffing and communication infrastructure. The town should create short and long-term plans for public safety, following the best professional standards and goals of the comprehensive plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consider requiring sprinklers in all building types, including single-family residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Compare street design guidelines to the ability of emergency vehicles to provide adequate fire response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Meet ISO rating standards for fire protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Evaluate the feasibility of creating inter-jurisdictional and regional service areas, stations and departments for fire and police</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ongoing Initiatives:* As the mix of land uses in the downtown become more mixed and development extends into the NC 73 area, police and fire staff will have to adjust their coverage, staffing and training plans. Public safety cannot be compromised as a result of increased density and commercial development. |
| - Identify innovative solutions to future public safety needs |
| - Continue community policing strategies to prevent crime |
| - Anticipate greater public safety concerns during the development review process |
| - Identify ways to link service calls, population ratios, and other industry standards to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance |
| - Modify design guidelines of streets to accommodate reasonably-sized emergency vehicles |

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 2: Provide Adequate Fire, Police and Emergency Service in All Incorporated Areas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The street design guidelines have been examined for emergency vehicles and the Town of Davidson currently meet a feasible ISO rating for fire protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There is no longer an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Progress has been made on other goals including considering requiring sprinklers, coordinating efforts regionally, and addressing public safety needs and concerns.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Additions or Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ Establish emergency preparedness plans and activities for natural and manmade disasters- plan evacuation routes, identify places of shelter, establish emergency alert system, develop post-disaster recovery plans and continuity of operations plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Take measures to improve response time of fire and police including funding additional locations, partnering with neighboring jurisdictions to increase coverage, providing housing at stations, and encouraging officers to take their vehicles home at the end of shift</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Livability Theme: Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities

### Conditions and Concerns
- Limited number of office sites, especially in downtown, for mid-sized employers
- Relatively homogenous job types and industries
- Much of the town’s potential spending power is “leaking” outside Davidson’s boundaries
- Lack of in-town job opportunities, especially for low-income residents

### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 1: Encourage Small and Independent Businesses**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town should spend the first five years studying small and independent business trends, supporting existing small businesses, and promoting the downtown as an ideal place for new small businesses. As vacancies are being filled in the historic sections of downtown, the town and the local business community should expand opportunities for small business growth within walking distance of the transit station.

- Inventory existing small and in-home businesses
- Consider providing mini-grants or loans to encourage small businesses
- Maintain a database of vacant office or retail space throughout the town for marketing

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The downtown should continue to serve as the main incubator for small and independent businesses of varying types and sizes. Former start-up businesses will look for larger space as they grow. Town staff and local realtors should help small business owners find larger retail or office space in other commercial centers in Davidson.

- Assist in the formation of small business cooperative for shared office support services
- Market local small business success stories
- Provide more meeting and office space for small businesses
- Encourage owners of growing businesses to mentor emerging small businesses
- Create a program to champion small business town-wide

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Davidson should work with regional, state and federal agencies to create “green jobs” through new incentives and policies. The town should also prepare for future industries by starting small with pilot projects, new policies, incubators and marketing.

- Market Davidson as a model for K-12 education, civic involvement, and active living
- Initiate the Fit Davidson pilot program and consider a similar town-wide implementation

*Ongoing Initiatives:* As economic opportunities in Davidson increase, the residential population will become diverse and require a variety of employment choices. The town should encourage business owners to be strong community partners and environmental stewards. New employment centers will build on sites along major highways.

- Provide jobs for a variety of skill-sets, including disabled persons and low-income residents
- Connect businesses with adjacent neighborhoods
- Recruit bio-technology, medical, and social research firms

### Progress

**Goal 1: Encourage Small and Independent Businesses**

- An inventory of businesses and a database of vacant office space is available for marketing purposes within the Town of Davidson.
- Programs to champion and support small businesses exist.

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**

- Progress has been made in marketing Davidson as a model for K-12 education, civic involvement and active
living as well as providing jobs for a variety of people.
- Additional efforts to recruit bio-technology, medical, and social research firms is needed.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**
- Develop an inventory of health providers in the Town of Davidson and surrounding communities including small businesses such as chiropractor offices, psychologists, family practices, specialists, homeopathic practitioners, etc.
- Work with small doctor’s offices to market their services to new residents and request their assistance at Ada Jenkins and other low-income service providers
- Support the development of fitness centers and medical offices- especially in areas where there is currently limited access to these facilities
- Increase partnerships with regional medical facilities and research centers including UNC Charlotte School of Medicine

**Livability Theme: Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity**

**Conditions and Concerns**
- More consideration for aging population, including design of housing and transportation amenities

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town should require housing and commercial development appropriate for occupants of all ages and abilities. Davidson should be promoted as an ideal place for entrepreneurs, minorities and new graduates to start or relocate their businesses. The town should also celebrate and fully support the needs of teenagers and young adults.

- Develop public safety programs aimed at protecting teenagers and young adults
- Include aging-in-place responsibilities as part of a town staff position
- Evaluate policies and ordinances based on their effect to the senior population

**Goal 2: Provide a Full Range of Services and Opportunities for All Socioeconomic Groups**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town should continue requiring affordable housing in all new residential developments and research ways to maintain affordability of older homes near the downtown. Town staff and advocates should also continue to promote the benefits of socioeconomic diversity.

- Evaluate the need for a local urgent care center and expanded health care facilities

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Recognizing that many of Davidson’s residents will continue to commute to work, affordable housing within close proximity of the transit station will be critical to quality of life and the success of commuter rail. Additional programs should also be established to support low to moderate income families for non-housing needs. Public transit should connect low and moderate income families to all major neighborhood, civic and commercial centers.

- Market affordable housing opportunities to teachers and other service providers
- Work with local farmers and markets to provide health food choices for all economic groups

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups**

- Aging-in-place has been considered by the Health and Wellness Supervisor position with Parks and Recreation and through the Planning Department with the Davidson Design for Life Initiative and the Davidson Committee on Aging; including evaluating policies and ordinances for their impact on the senior population.
- Progress has been made on developing safety programs aimed at young adults and teens.
**Goal 2: Provide a Full Range of Services and Opportunities for All Socioeconomic Groups**
- Affordable housing has been marketed to teachers and other service providers including police and fire.
- Progress has been made on evaluating the need for a local urgent care center and expanded health care facilities.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**
- Include the recommendations from the Food Systems Plan HIA in regards to providing food for all economic groups including partnering with doctors and the farmer’s market to offer healthy living prescriptions
- Offer affordable housing options near transit for service providers (especially those working long shifts) to increase their safety and access to medical centers
- Offer transit/shuttles to medical centers for service providers, low-income individuals, and older adults

**Livability Theme: Encourage Committed Civic Involvement and Responsibility**

**Conditions and Concerns**
- Strong support for the Ada Jenkins Center

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 2: Sustain and Promote More Resident Volunteerism and Involvement**
*Short-Term Recommendations:* Town staff should spend considerable time with residents of all ages and interests during public meetings. Local advisory boards should become more engaged and influential on short-term and long-term decisions. The town should consider ways to promote existing volunteer groups while promoting town-sponsored volunteer activities. Communication between neighborhoods, officials and town staff should continue to improve.
- Promote the town’s volunteer programs and policies
- Create a neighborhood phone tree for disaster/ emergency response
- Create a clearinghouse of volunteer contacts, skill sets, interests, availability, etc.

**Goal 5: Provide Support and Space for Churches, Religious Institutions, Childcare Services, and Community Centers**
*Short-Term Recommendations:* As the population grows, there will likely be more demand for government, religious space, childcare, and recreation centers. The town should consider ways to accommodate public meetings and events in new government facility plans.
- Locate future government offices or police and fire stations in neighborhoods or mixed use settings

**Progress**

**Goal 2: Sustain and Promote More Resident Volunteerism and Involvement**
- The town markets volunteer programs through its newsletter and ecrier.
- There is a messaging system set up to call registered residents during emergencies.
- There is no clearinghouse of volunteers.

**Goal 5: Provide Support and Space for Churches, Religious Institutions, Childcare Services, and Community Centers**
- There is a commitment to locate future government offices and stations in neighborhoods or mixed use settings but no funding to do so at this time.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**
- Work with the Davidson Committee of Aging and existing nonprofits to vet service providers for the senior population and establish a volunteer program to help seniors meet their needs
- Research the possibility of creating Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) or the village concept for meeting the needs of seniors who choose/are able to remain in their own home
- Partner with area medical providers to provide volunteer services to assist them as well as gain their
assistance at Ada Jenkins, urgent care centers, or during health promotion activities

- Ask leading medical providers to serve on advisory boards to the Town of Davidson including the planning board, livability board, and the committee on aging

### Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use

#### Conditions and Concerns

- Relatively health-conscious population

#### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* As the costs of owning and driving motor vehicles increase, residents will become more interested in walking and using bicycles for local trips. However, the majority of residents do not feel safe sharing the roads or know enough about local pedestrian or bicycle networks to make efficient use of them. Town staff and local pedestrian and cycling advocates should continue to educate residents about the benefits of cycling and walking.

- Post educational materials about active living to the town website

**Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Davidson should focus on providing easy and affordable access to local or regional food sources. Open space within the town limits are opportunities for community gardening and sustainable land management. Land development policies should be evaluated for how well they support agriculture and food production.

- Establish partnerships with Davidson College, state agencies, and health professionals to encourage healthy lifestyle choices

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Davidson should consider ways to ensure the success of the Davidson Farmer’s Market and other local agricultural distribution networks. The Rural Planning Area should be promoted as a prime location for small to medium-sized working farms.

- Create financial assistance programs that make local food more affordable to low income residents

#### Progress

**Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel**

- Educational material on active living has been included on the town website.

**Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods**

- It is unclear in what ways the Town of Davidson should partner with Davidson College, state agencies, and health professionals to encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

- No progress has been made to provide financial assistance programs to make local food more affordable to low income residents

#### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Incorporate recommendations from the Food System Plan HIA into the Comprehensive Plan to include suggestions on making local food more affordable to low income residents

+ Work with Davidson College to: replicate its farm elsewhere within the Town of Davidson and share produce with low-income residents, share athletic facilities during off-seasons, encourage safe and healthy behavior among their students and faculty, provide health-related internships, etc.

+ Partner with state agencies such as the Health Department, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Transportation to track health outcomes, develop affordable housing, promote healthy community design, and create health promoting environments
| + Work with the Health Department and local health professionals to provide training and materials to discuss healthy lifestyles and distribute “healthy living” prescriptions to encourage exercise and nutrition as prevention measures instead of medication for treatment |
Access to Public Transit and Active Transportation

Health Impacts
- Increased physical activity
- Injury prevention
- Reduced air and noise pollution
- Increased mobility and health equity

Livability Themes
- Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use
- Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity
- Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources
- Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services

Description of Component

Healthy communities are designed to encourage walking, biking and use of public transit. Street design, land use and site planning, safe routes, and the availability of public transit can impact levels of use and physical activity levels. Using active transportation to travel to school or work, complete daily errands, or for recreational purposes increases overall physical activity and contributes to physical health. Increased physical activity assists with weight management, strengthens bones and muscles, improves mental health, and reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. In addition, by reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled by personal vehicles, increasing the use of public transit and means of active transportation to destinations reduces the amount of air pollution which is a significant cause and trigger for respiratory diseases such as asthma. Providing well designed facilities such as wide sidewalks, greenways, buffered bike lanes, and clearly marked crossings around transit stops can also reduce the likelihood of injuries for those using transit, walking, or biking. Providing these facilities and mixing land uses so destinations are close to housing options (especially affordable housing) can increase mobility for seniors and low-income populations and help reduce health equity gaps by connecting at risk populations to health services and health promoting resources such as healthy food and recreation options.

Current Conditions (2014)

Sidewalk Connectivity

The goal is to have sidewalks on both sides of the street and connecting neighborhoods to area destinations to allow for safe walking to all parts of town. The majority of streets in Davidson are relatively pedestrian-friendly with sidewalks on at least one side of the street (see Map 20). However, there are some gaps in connectivity (along South St., Potts St., Jackson St., Jetton St., Delburg St., and Beaty St. in Downtown) and it is estimated that another 8.5 miles of new sidewalk is needed to increase connectivity and provide safe pedestrian access. Other roads including Concord Rd., E Rocky River Rd., Lorimer Rd., and Pine Rd. provide little or no comfort for pedestrians and will require major pedestrian improvements. See the section on Access to Recreation and Open Space for the Pedestrian Suitability Map developed for the active transportation plan (see Map 13).
Map 20: Davidson’s Existing Sidewalk Network

Figure 2.7: Existing Sidewalk Network
Map 2: Davidson's Existing Bicycle Network

Figure 2.11: Existing Bicycle Network

Legend:
- **Bicycle Lane**
- **Shared Lane Marking**
- **Sidewalk**
- **Greenway**
- **Designated Bike Route**
- **Lake Norman Bike Route**
  - Elementary School
  - Middle School
  - High School
  - Private/Charter School
  - Bike/Ped Crashes ( Fatal)
  - Bike/Ped Crashes (Injury)
- **Sewer Easement**
- **Floodplain**
- **Parks**
- **Davidson Corporate Limits**
- **Mecklenburg County**
- **Other Counties**

Scale: 0 0.5 1 Miles

Counties:
- Iredell County
- Cabarrus County
- Mecklenburg County
**Bicycle Network**

Davidson’s bicycle network currently consists of on-road bike lanes, separate bike paths, greenways and unsigned neighborhood streets (see Map 21). There are over 10 miles of bicycle facilities in town. With its compact nature, low speed limits, lower traffic volumes, and human-scale land uses, Davidson provides opportunities for short bicycle trips, reasonable commuting across town and connections to routes leaving town. Potential barriers to biking include connectivity issues, long block length, higher speed limits, traffic volume, bicycle parking and driveway access management. See the section on Access to Recreation and Open Space for the Bicycling Suitability Map developed for the active transportation plan (see Map 12).

**Greenways**

The Town of Davidson has 8 miles of greenway connected by an additional 13 miles of sidewalks and bike routes or bike lanes. There is the Randall R. Kincaid Greenway along the South Fork of the Rocky River, which serves as an important connection for the neighborhoods between E Rocky River Rd. and Davidson-Concord Rd. The goal of the greenway network is to connect residences with destinations including schools, parks, places of employment and retail areas.

**Map 22: Davidson’s Greenways**
Map of Transit Routes and Schedule

Davidson is served by the North Mecklenburg Express Route of the Charlotte Area Transit System which connects Uptown Charlotte to Griffith St. in Davidson via Interstate 77. During weekdays, the bus is scheduled to come by every 25 minutes starting at 5:22 A.M. and running until 9:01 A.M. to transport those commuting from Davidson to Charlotte. The bus resumes service in Charlotte with the earliest arrival back into Davidson being 3:45 P.M. and the latest being 9:03 P.M. This route does not run on the weekends (see Table 14 & Maps 23 &25).

Davidson is also served by the Village Rider which connects the Huntersville Gateway Park and Ride Lot, north through Cornelius and all the way to Beaty St. in Davidson. The Village Rider operates hourly starting at 6:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. inbound to Huntersville on weekdays, hourly starting at 9:30 A.M. and ending at 6:30 P.M. on Saturdays, and hourly from 9:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. on Sundays (see Table 15 & Maps 24-25).

Map 23: 77X North Mecklenburg Express Route
Table 14: Schedule for the 77X North Mecklenburg Express

<table>
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<tr>
<th>77X North Mecklenburg Express - WEEKDAYS</th>
<th>77X North Mecklenburg Express - WEEKDAYS</th>
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<tbody>
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Table 15: Schedule for the 97 Village Rider

<table>
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<th>97 Village Rider-Cornelius - WEEKDAYS</th>
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<td>10:27p</td>
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74
Table 16: Existing Language, Progress, and Suggested Additions or Changes for Access to Public Transit and Active Transportation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions and Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Vast majority of town residents drive to work for an average of 25 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regional interest in expanding Interstate 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong local commitment to street connectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No planning document that specifically addresses pedestrian accessibility and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Misinformation about and hostility toward pedestrian, cyclist, and motorist rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Insufficient parking downtown for business and future transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unclear gateways to town and visual cues informing motorists to yield to pedestrians and cyclists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conflict between increasing congestion along I-77 and NC 115 and desired pedestrian-friendly downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Insufficient local, state, and federal funding for transportation needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Multiple cycling, running and sports-recreation clubs and organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interest in making streets and public spaces senior-friendly and accessible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel

**Short-Term Recommendations:** As the costs of owning and driving motor vehicles increase, residents will become more interested in walking and using bicycles for local trips. However, the majority of residents do not feel safe sharing the roads or know enough about local pedestrian or bicycle networks to make efficient use of them. Town staff and local pedestrian and cycling advocates should continue to educate residents about the benefits of cycling and walking.

- Initiate mentoring programs and demonstrations for alternative travel
- Provide bicycle storage, changing facilities, and increased bicycle parking
- Increase police use of bikes, and add segways to town vehicle inventory
- Install more bike racks and walkways downtown, in commercial and civic centers
- Support local cycling clubs, retailers and cycling advocates
- Sign bicycle and walking routes on low traffic neighborhood streets
- Improve signage on local greenways to identify distances and nearby destinations
- Post educational materials about active living to the town website

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Develop partnerships between the town, Davidson College, state agencies, health professionals, and residents to promote active lifestyle choices. Pilot programs, such as the Fit Davidson initiative, should be continued as a way to encourage the community to be more active and less dependent on motor vehicles.

- Continue to promote bicycle, pedestrian, and bus travel to local schools
- Help coordinate walking and running clubs
- Maintain safety for pedestrians and cyclists in high-traffic areas, such as downtown
- Continue to sponsor bike helmet fit clinics and bicycle safety rodeos
- Promote bicycle pedicabs for local events
- Create a shared bike program similar to Davidson College
- Plan for optimum bicycle and pedestrian access and safety near the transit station

Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation

**Short-Term Recommendations:** Thousands of Davidson residents drive alone to work 25 miles or more each way, not unlike many residents from neighboring towns and counties. Davidson residents should be encouraged to take advantage of existing transit services and coordinate carpooling in order to reduce personal fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, reduce road congestion, and improve air quality. Local leaders and officials should continue...
working with regional partners to expedite commuter rail service to the north Mecklenburg County area.

- Create a transit rider orientation or mentoring program
- Adopt a local station area plan that includes easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Improve pedestrian facilities at current bus stops
- Work with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line
- Establish land development incentives and policies to encourage higher densities near transit stations

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Mentoring and vehicle share programs should be established, and educational materials should describe tips for sustainable commuting options. Commuter rail will make it easier for more residents and employees to reduce their dependency on motor vehicles.

- Develop a vehicle share program
- Provide sufficient transit parking downtown
- Provide shuttle routes between the rail station area and other regional destinations
- Work with the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) to maintain affordable public transportation

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel**

- A lot of progress has been made in organizing clubs, promoting safe routes to school, and safety education in regards to walking and biking.
- Plans have been created for bicycle and pedestrian access and safety around the proposed transit station.
- Some progress has been made in installing additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities and maintaining safety in the downtown area and other high traffic areas.

**Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation**

- Little progress has been made in increasing transit access, use or safety around existing bus stops although there has been a lot of progress around the topic of extending rail from Charlotte and development around the station area.
- No progress has been made in incorporating a vehicle share program or encouraging carpooling.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

- Consider partnering with neighborhoods and businesses to offer a zip car or other vehicle share program or shuttle services especially in higher density, senior communities, and low-income neighborhoods
- Work with Charlotte Area Transit and other partners to improve the conditions around existing bus stops (benches, shelters, clear signage, and safe crossing)
- Coordinate bicycle route signage throughout town including route, mileage, and popular destinations

**Livability Theme: Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- More consideration for aging population, including design of housing and transportation amenities

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town should require housing and commercial development appropriate for occupants of all ages and abilities. Davidson should be promoted as an ideal place for entrepreneurs, minorities and new graduates to start or relocate their businesses. The town should also celebrate and fully support the needs of teenagers and young adults.

- Evaluate policies and ordinances based on their effect to the senior population

**Progress**

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### Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups

- The Town of Davidson regularly evaluates policies and ordinances based on their effect to the senior population

#### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Work with Charlotte Area Transit, Mecklenburg County Senior Services, Centralina Council of Governments, private partners, and other service providers and volunteers to offer shuttle or transportation services for seniors
+ Design sidewalks, crosswalks, and greenways with senior populations in mind as well as children and able-bodied adults - for example allow ample crossing time for those using a cane or walker

### Livability Theme: Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources

#### Conditions and Concerns

- Continuing regional air quality concerns
- Inadequate tree preservation ordinance enabling legislation

#### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* An open space plan should describe priority natural areas for preservation and enhancement. Policies should be reevaluated to preserve well-connected and quality habitats, significant farmland, and accessible park areas.

- Redefine viewsheds to include a variety of spaces along public streets and greenways

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The Town of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, and local conservation organizations should allocate funding toward the purchase of open space property. However, it is anticipated that most open space will be acquired through development and conservation easements.

- Protect viewsheds along greenways and roads in rural area

**Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Town staff and local non-profit organizations should educate residents and property owners on water conservation, pruning techniques and native plant species. As the historic tree canopy in the downtown area ages, the town and residents should replant with native, hardwood species.

- Work toward designation as a Tree City USA
- Promote healthy pruning techniques
- Set measurable goals to increase and sustain the urban forest
- Consider using only native, drought-tolerant species in town landscaping projects
- Create a “tree bank” for developers and home-owners to mitigate for tree removal and provide funding for new replanting efforts
- Create a tree canopy replanting and management plan
- Allocate significant staff time to urban forestry activities
- Establish a small grant fund to assist low income property owners with removal or pruning of trees
- Revise open space or tree preservation requirements to better preserve existing tree canopy in all planning areas

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Several public access areas should be made available on Lake Davidson for canoes, swimming, and fishing. The Town of Davidson staff should employ more sustainable management practices of publicly owned open space. The Davidson Lands Conservancy should become a regional leader in sustainable management techniques.

- Construct more off road greenways for habitat preservation
- Promote native tree planting and prohibit invasive species
- Bury utility lines along all public streets
- Balance the need for roads with tree canopy protection
- Implement the Tree Inventory (2007) recommendations for urban canopy maintenance

**Goal 3: Sustain and Enhance Water and Air Quality**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Air and water are natural resources that span jurisdictional boundaries, and are therefore regional issues. The town should continue to work with regional agencies to educate the public about the importance of air and water quality. Davidson residents could positively impact the natural environment by adopting their properties with water saving practices and reducing their motor vehicle miles travelled.

- Promote green roofs, green walls, and pervious pavements
- Create incentives to reduce hydrocarbon emissions by local businesses or institutions
- Educate residents about current and projected air quality conditions

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The town should plan restoration projects along waterways, considering new policies or models for reducing air pollutants, and design public properties and buildings to be water and energy efficient. Davidson should also continue to help the region obtain state and federal air quality standards.

- Monitor air quality conditions near all K-12 schools and government buildings

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**Progress**

**Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space**

- Progress has been made in defining and protecting viewsheds which can lead to a nicer walk or bicycle ride.

**Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy**

- Progress has been made in preserving and expanding the tree canopy including planting additional trees, landscaping with native plants, and promoting healthy pruning techniques.
- Additional progress is needed in burying utility lines and constructing more greenways.
- No effort has been made to establish a small grant fund to help with pruning or tree removal for low-income residents.

**Goal 3: Sustain and Enhance Water and Air Quality**

- Progress has been made in promoting green roofs, green walls, and pervious pavements.
- The Town of Davidson has not done anything concerning reducing or monitoring air quality and typically depends on Mecklenburg County for these services.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

+ Use a system of greenways, protected bike lanes, and sidewalks to connect destinations (especially residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, commercial centers, offices, etc.) and provide safe travel for all ages and abilities
+ Regularly prune trees and bushes beside sidewalks, greenways and bike lanes to allow for the safe travel of bicyclists, walkers, and drivers of large vehicles such as busses
+ Establish a local air quality monitoring station/volunteer program and provide education to residents and businesses on how to reduce emissions
+ Reduce the emissions being produced by Davidson’s fleet of vehicles, buildings, and equipment
+ Build parks and greenways around bodies of water to improve the riparian buffer and protect water quality
+ Consider using innovative stormwater management techniques such as rain gardens as buffers between sidewalks or bike lanes and traffic

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Livability Theme: Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services

Conditions and Concerns

- No clear method for prioritizing local transportation improvements
- Misaligned Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) policies locate schools in non-pedestrian and non-bicycle friendly environments
- Over $107 million worth of capital projects the town would like to see built over the next 30 years

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services

*Short-Term Recommendations:* All departments should strive to be recognized as leaders in their respective fields. As residents seek to achieve more sustainable and healthy lifestyles, town services should respond accordingly. The town should grow its portfolio of services by expanding existing and building new partnerships with affiliated agencies and service providers.

- Repair uneven gutters, pavement, potholes, and brush in the roadways, bikeways, and sidewalks
- Create a town staff position to oversee sustainability or livability initiatives
- Create a local transportation improvement plan
- Prepare construction documents for priority transportation needs to ensure funding readiness
- Consider requiring Traffic Impact Analysis for priority transportation needs to ensure funding readiness

Goal 5: Establish Good Working Relationships and Firm Priorities with Regional Agencies, Utility Providers, and Adjoining Jurisdictions

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Given the importance of transportation systems, the north Mecklenburg County and south Iredell County area should continue to work closely to plan improvements to the road and transit network. In order to maintain high quality of life for Davidson residents and provide low-cost services, the town should work with its regional partners to identify creative ways to jointly serve the region’s residents.

- Identify feasible alternatives for north-south travel with neighboring jurisdictions
- Create a staff position to focus on transportation planning
- Continue to require that all new utility lines be buried underground
- Support widening I-77 but not at the expense of pedestrian safety or sense of place

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The north Mecklenburg County and south Iredell County area should continue to work toward good connectivity within the larger region, primarily through well-planned transportation networks and communication systems. The town should support the construction of two-lane roads and multi-modal streets with the understanding that some rural roads may require three to four lanes or controlled access. Utility companies will continue to control significant amounts of property, so Davidson and its neighbors should meet with utilities on a regular basis to ensure compatibility with local plans.

- Work with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Organization (MUMPO) to ensure compatibility of land uses with access management policies and road maintenance and improvement plans
- Continue involvement in regional transportation planning organizations
- Continue to work closely with neighboring towns to manage regional traffic concerns and the design of new roads and improvements

Progress

Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services

- A town position to oversee sustainability or livability initiatives has been created and filled.
- Progress has been made on creating a local transportation improvement plan, preparing construction documents for priority transportation needs, and considering Traffic Impact Analysis for commercial development.
• Repairing uneven gutters, pavement, potholes, and brush in the roadway, bikeways, and sidewalks is an ongoing goal as work is needed.

Goal 5: Establish Good Working Relationships and Firm Priorities with Regional Agencies, Utility Providers, and Adjoining Jurisdictions

• Davidson works closely with other municipalities, NCDOT and the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (formerly MUMPO) to identify alternatives for north-south travel, widening I-77, and develop access and traffic management plans.
• A staff position focusing on transportation planning has not been hired.
• All new utility lines are buried according to regulations in the planning ordinance.

Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Work with regional partners to develop a connected and consistently designed network of greenways, bicycle facilities and sidewalks
+ Partner with local and regional environmental organizations to create and coordinate a street cleanup, trail building and greenway pickup volunteer program(s)
+ Incorporate walking and biking level of service into considerations for traffic impact analysis, transportation funding priorities, and project selection
+ Partner with Charlotte Area Transit System to provide additional bus and rail services to connect Davidson with Charlotte and surrounding municipalities as well as shuttle services to additional destinations within Davidson (with Aging-in-Place and health equity in mind)
Access to Quality Affordable Housing

Health Impacts
- Greater social and economic integration
- Reduced overcrowding
- Sanitary living conditions

Livability Themes
- Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity
- Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities
- Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles

Description of Component

Safe, healthy, and affordable housing is essential to a healthy community. Housing affordability can be accomplished in many ways including providing a range of housing options for all stages of life and incomes, providing financial and homeownership counseling, creating and preserving below-market-value housing options, and assisting those who may need help maintaining their home through volunteer support. The lack of quality affordable housing could cause families to seek substandard forms of shelter within the town, to pay more than they can afford to in housing, or to leave the town to find less expensive housing options in surrounding communities. This can result in overcrowding, having insufficient funds to maintain the house and pay for other life expenses, having longer work commutes, and other deficiencies.\(^2\)

The negative health consequences of living in substandard or unaffordable housing could include:

- an increased risk for fire, electrical injuries, lead poisoning, rodent infestation, mold, childhood asthma and other illnesses and injuries;
- overcrowding and related stress, higher mortality rates, infectious disease, and inhibited childhood development;
- excessive rent or housing cost burden and the associated risks of increased stress, likelihood of overcrowding, and lack of basic necessities such as food, electricity, and adequate heat or air conditioning; and,
- inability to age-in-place or remain independent and maintain a home as one gets older.\(^3\)

Current Conditions (2014)

The Davidson Housing Coalition was incorporated in 1997 with the mission to “work with the larger community to preserve and create affordable housing options and to prepare families and individuals for financial stability and homeownership.” The Coalition has a total of 68 units including: 54 apartments (18 units within Creekside Corner, 32 units within the Bungalows, and 4 units within the Cottages) and 14 single family homes (9 in Deer Park, 2 in Creekside, and 3 in St. Albans).\(^3\)

Davidson Housing Coalition also offers a number of programs including:

- Homebuyer Education and Financial Literacy Program including homebuyer education workshops and one-on-one counseling sessions are offered to anyone in need of these services. A Financial and Housing Counselor is
also available for clients working towards purchasing a home. Topics include: spending, saving, and budgeting; credit and debt evaluation; mortgages and lenders; and home maintenance.

- **Hammers (Hands Around Mecklenburg-Mooresville Making Emergency Repairs Safely)** is a partnership with Davidson College that serves Huntersville, Cornelius, Davidson and Mooresville with emergency home repairs. Since April of 2005, HAMMERS has completed repairs in more than 145 homes including carpentry, electricity, plumbing, roofing, furnace/air conditioning, and accessibility.

- **SHARE (Sharing How Access to Resources Empowers)** is a community program designed to give local residents access to job search resources that would otherwise be unavailable. The program started in 2010 as a partnership with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Workforce Development Board and JobLink Career Center and has helped more than 278 people. 32

**Inclusionary Zoning Policy**

The Town of Davidson currently has an inclusionary zoning policy with the goal of having 12.5% of the housing stock within Davidson being considered affordable. Developers have two options when providing affordable units: 1) Developments with 7 or fewer units must either provide one affordable unit or make a payment in lieu to the Town; or 2) Developments with 8 or more units must provide 12.5% of the total units at varying rates of affordability (Very Low Income 30-100% of units, Low Income 0-70% of units, Moderate Income 0-20% of units, and Middle Income 0-20% of units). With the planning ordinance re-write taking place in 2014, there has been a lot of discussion on offering alternatives to construction by developers including payment in lieu and land dedication for affordable housing. 33

**House Value/ Available Affordable Units**

The median house value of owner-occupied units is $411,700 as of the 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The majority of homes are between $500,000 and $999,999 (34%) with another 30% being in between $300,000 and $499,999. The range of what is considered affordable based on area median income and what percent of that income is being considered is $120,000 to $220,000. Only 18% of owner-occupied homes are under $200,000 with 8% of homes being between $100,000 and $149,999. Another 15% are between $200,000 and $299,999. 34

**Mixture of Housing**

There is a total of 4,442 housing units in Davidson as of the 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Of these housing units, 2,894 of them are single family detached homes, 718 are townhomes, 32 are triplexes or quadraplexes, 760 are apartments, and 38 are mobile homes. The majority of these homes were built between 1990 and 2009 (69%) which is to be expected given the population growth during that time period. Most homes have 9 rooms or more with the average house having 6 rooms and 3 bedrooms. 34

**Housing Burden**

Davidson’s median household income is $83,730 which is relatively high in comparison to Mecklenburg County ($55,961) and North Carolina ($46,450). The median monthly household costs for all occupied units is $1,649 while the median monthly household costs for owner-occupied units is $1,913 and $900 for renters. Those who spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs are considered to be burdened by housing costs. The following table provides additional information concerning the percentage of people who are burdened by housing costs based on their household income. 34
Table 16: Percent Burdened by Household Costs by Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Owner-Occupied</th>
<th>Renter-Occupied</th>
<th>Total Occupied Units</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Less than $20,000</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
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<td>$20,000 to $34,999</td>
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<td>4.9%</td>
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<td>$75,000 or more</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
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**Housing Tenure**

Of the 3,809 occupied units, 78% are owner-occupied. The vast majority of occupied units were moved into between 2000 and 2009.  

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Livability Theme: Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity

Conditions and Concerns
- Shrinking or insufficient affordable housing stock, especially rental units
- Few alternative housing sites available
- Decreasing racial diversity
- Strong family connections within African-American communities
- More consideration for aging population, including design of housing and transportation amenities

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups

Short-Term Recommendations: The town should require housing and commercial development appropriate for occupants of all ages and abilities. Davidson should be promoted as an ideal place for entrepreneurs, minorities and new graduates to start or relocate their businesses. The town should also celebrate and fully support the needs of teenagers and young adults.
- Amend ordinances to permit co-housing, cottage housing, and other housing alternatives
- Require universal design specifications as a percentage of total housing units in future developments
- Include aging-in-place responsibilities as part of a town staff position
- Evaluate policies and ordinances based on their effect to the senior population

Ongoing Initiatives: Developers and town staff should encourage young professionals to move into Davidson’s new mixed use centers. Meanwhile, the town should expect more retirees and senior residents to increase the average age of the population. The population at build-out will be less dependent on local services such as schools and lawn care. Older residents should be active in local politics, volunteer organizations, and business leadership.
- Create an artists-in-residence program
- Develop flexible and affordable senior housing

Goal 2: Provide a Full Range of Services and Opportunities for All Socioeconomic Groups

Short-Term Recommendations: The town should continue requiring affordable housing in all new residential developments and research ways to maintain affordability of older homes near the downtown. Town staff and advocates should also continue to promote the benefits of socioeconomic diversity.
- Clarify the roles and eligibility process of the Davidson Housing Coalition and the town’s affordable housing program

Ongoing Initiatives: Recognizing that many of Davidson’s residents will continue to commute to work, affordable housing within close proximity of the transit station will be critical to quality of life and the success of commuter rail. Additional programs should also be established to support low to moderate income families for non-housing needs. Public transit should connect low and moderate income families to all major neighborhood, civic and commercial centers.
- Prevent net loss in the number of existing affordable houses and neighborhoods
- Market affordable housing opportunities to teachers and other service providers
- Promote rental and high-density affordable housing
- Locate affordable housing throughout the community
- Encourage cooperatives for food, childcare and housing

Progress

Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups
- Ordinances have been amended to permit co-housing, cottage housing, and other housing alternatives.
- Aging-in-place responsibilities are part of a town staff position and additional staff have become involved with the Davidson Committee on Aging.
- Progress has been made on incorporating universal design features within the housing policy and evaluating policies to determine the health implication on seniors through the Universal Design and Housing HIA.
- Progress has been made on developing flexible and affordable senior housing and this is an ongoing goal.

**Goal 2: Provide a Full Range of Services and Opportunities for All Socioeconomic Groups**
- The town of Davidson has partnered with the Davidson Housing Coalition to clarify roles, market affordable housing, and locate affordable housing throughout the community.
- As part of the inclusionary zoning, affordable housing is an ongoing requirement for new development meaning the number of affordable homes should be increasing and they are dispersed throughout different neighborhoods.
- Process has been made in preventing the net loss in affordable housing and promoting rental and high-density affordable housing options.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**
- Work with homeowners within affordable neighborhoods to make sure their properties are well maintained and remain affordable
- Partner with Davidson Housing Coalition to evaluate the current condition of the housing market and the ability to meet the needs of those requiring affordable housing in Davidson
- Work with the Davidson Committee on Aging to explore different housing options for seniors including ways to support aging-in-place, the village movement or naturally occurring retirement communities, condos and townhomes in commercial centers and downtown, etc.
- Form an interdepartmental team to determine how to optimize services being provided to low-income and senior residents including housing, transportation, recreation, economic opportunities, safety, etc.
- Work with Mecklenburg County to monitor unhealthy housing conditions including risks for lead poisoning, flooding, fire, inadequate heating or cooling, poor indoor air quality, etc.
- Partner with large employers to study where their employees live and to locate work force housing or housing for young professionals near places of employment

**Livability Theme: Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities**

**Conditions and Concerns**
- Lack of in-town job opportunities, especially for low-income residents
- Insufficient amount of office, retail, lodging, residential and entertainment venues in downtown to attract regional tourism market and diverse population

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**

*Ongoing Initiatives:* As economic opportunities in Davidson increase, the residential population will become diverse and require a variety of employment choices. The town should encourage business owners to be strong community partners and environmental stewards. New employment centers will build on sites along major highways.
- Provide jobs for a variety of skill-sets, including disabled persons and low-income residents
- Connect businesses with adjacent neighborhoods
- Recruit bio-technology, medical, and social research firms

**Progress**

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**
- Process has been made on providing jobs for a variety of skill-sets, including disabled persons and low-income residents.
Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Work with major employers to increase affordable housing opportunities within walking or biking distance to places of employment
+ Locate additional employers along transit routes and bike routes/ greenways
+ If medical facilities or other businesses with shift-work and low-paying/ entry-level jobs locate in Davidson try to provide a mix of affordable housing opportunities close to employment site
+ If connections (biking, walking, transit) do not exist between neighborhoods and employment opportunities then work together with businesses and neighborhoods to fill the gaps in connectivity
+ Work with Mecklenburg County to continue to conduct household travel surveys and monitor commute time and distance and compare to household income- follow this survey up with a study of why people live in their respective neighborhood/ community especially if they are experiencing a long commute

Livability Theme: Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles

Conditions and Concerns

- No annexation agreements between Davidson and Mooresville
- Restriction against extending rural sewer lines has limited rural residential growth
- Low-density residential development potential in the rural area
- Conflict between demands for moderate density infill development and preservation of downtown character

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas

Short-Term Recommendations: In keeping with the Targeted Growth Plan described in Chapter 4 of the comprehensive plan, the town should establish the downtown and village area (older surrounding neighborhoods) as the highest priority for infill, redevelopment and mixed use. The town should develop an incentive package to encourage this type of growth over the next ten years.

- Continue to allow for limited single-family infill development and redevelopment in the Village Infill Planning Area

Ongoing Initiatives: Transit will spur development in the downtown, and residents will need to be reassured that new development is in keeping with the comprehensive plan. The town should continue to monitor parking and vehicle congestion in the downtown area and ensure adequate levels of service.

- Encourage residential development, especially workforce and rental housing above commercial uses in the Village Center Planning Area

Progress

Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas

- Progress has been made in infill development and redevelopment in the Village Infill Planning Area as well as encouraging residential development above commercial uses in the Village Center Planning Area.

Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Identify where there is and where there could be additional workforce or rental housing within the Village Center Planning Area
+ Offer incentives for increasing affordable housing in the Village Infill Planning Area and the Village Center Planning Area and other mixed-use settings to allow for easy access to jobs and services
+ Work with small business owners and entrepreneurs to hire local and provide affordable housing opportunities when available (such as an apartment over the store if possible)
+ Consider allowing commercial businesses in the lower story of historic homes near Main Street while maintaining residents on the upper level(s)
Description of Component

A healthy community should provide a wide variety of job opportunities to its residents that are safe and provide a competitive wage on which they can live and support their families. Unemployment, underemployment, and lack of sufficient income are strong determinants of health outcomes. Often quality employment is linked to financial stability, accessibility to health care and health insurance, and additional advantages such as sick and maternity leave, flexible hours, and the ability to stay home and care for loved ones when they are ill. Studies indicate that individuals in households making less than a living wage live fewer years. Children of low-income families are less likely to graduate from high school, often continuing the cycle of low-paying employment within the family. Incomes that provide self-sufficiency have been linked to better health, improved nutrition, lower mortality and indirect health benefits such as reduced communicable diseases and community violence.\(^2\)

Current Conditions (2014)

Davidson, North Carolina has 237 businesses, the largest four being Ingersoll-Rand, Davidson College, MSC Industrial Supply Company, and Carolinas Healthcare System (see Map 26). The most prevalent types of employers are: educational services, health care, and social assistance (25.9% of employees); professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (13.2%); and retail trade (12.4%). Of the population ages 16 and over in Davidson, 61.3% are in the labor force, which is similar to the percentage statewide. Of this labor force, 7.3% are unemployed, which is much lower than the statewide unemployment rate of 10.5%. The average travel time to work is 23.1 minutes, which is similar to the statewide average.\(^3\)

Median Income

The median household income in Davidson is $83,730 with the majority of households making $200,000 or more in income and benefits (in 2012 inflation-adjusted dollars). The median family income in Davidson is $124,045 with the majority of families making $200,000 or more in income and benefits. Per capita income is $49,065 and the median nonfamily income is $39,000. The median earnings for workers is $35,992 with male full-time workers receiving on average $93,833 and female full-time workers receiving $56,178.\(^4\)
Work/Housing Balance

The Town of Davidson continuously works to balance economic opportunities (office buildings, retail, light industrial) with housing opportunities. The vast majority of employees for the major employers within the Town of Davidson do not reside within Davidson. Likewise a large percentage of residents of Davidson commute to Mooresville or Charlotte for employment. However, a growing number of residents are working from home and/or starting their own businesses within Davidson which is contributing to a growing network of small, local businesses. Additional research is needed to determine the work/housing balance within Davidson.
Table 18: Existing Language, Progress, and Suggested Additions or Changes for Access to Economic Opportunity

Livability Theme: Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions and Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• No collective strategy for increasing local economic growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Much of the town’s potential spending power is “leaking” outside Davidson’s boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of in-town job opportunities, especially for low-income residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Relatively homogenous job types and industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Well-suited to capture professional business/technical services market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited water and sewer utility availability in south Iredell County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No single-use commercial or light industrial planning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Insufficient amount of office, retail, lodging, residential, and entertainment venues in downtown to attract regional tourism market and diverse population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited number of office sites, especially in downtown, for mid-sized employers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Encourage Small and Independent Businesses

Short-Term Recommendations: The town should spend the first five years studying small and independent business trends, supporting existing small businesses, and promoting the downtown as an ideal place for new small businesses. As vacancies are being filled in the historic sections of downtown, the town and the local business community should expand opportunities for small business growth within walking distance of the transit station.

• Create a retail advertising campaign to emphasize local businesses—“Shop Davidson”
• Inventory existing small and in-home businesses
• Consider providing mini-grants or loans to encourage small businesses
• Maintain a database of vacant office or retail space throughout the town for marketing

Ongoing Initiatives: The downtown should continue to serve as the main incubator for small and independent businesses of varying types and sizes. Former start-up businesses will look for larger space as they grow. Town staff and local realtors should help small business owners find larger retail or office space in other commercial centers in Davidson.

• Encourage independent and/or specialty retail in downtown and the Exit 30 area
• Assist in the formation of small business cooperative for shared office support services
• Market local small business success stories
• Provide more meeting and office space for small businesses
• Encourage owners of growing businesses to mentor emerging small businesses
• Create a program to champion small business town-wide

Goal 2: Encourage Economic Growth that Supports Local Assets and Policies

Short-Term Recommendations: The town should spend the first five years refining its economic development strategies, incentive options and zoning regulations. The local business community and regional economic development partners should focus marketing strategies on the downtown area. As the commuter rail line and station is constructed, the town will likely experience sudden and intense redevelopment near the downtown. New businesses should support commuter, resident and business needs. Significant public infrastructure and transportation investments will be required in the downtown area.

• Establish regular meetings between town staff and local realtors to discuss business vacancies
• Provide a more streamlined development approval process for businesses
• Create and implement specific economic goals as described in a strategic economic development plan
• License existing and future businesses to collect baseline employment information
• Create an economic development advisory committee to assist staff decisions
• Create a staff position to oversee economic development throughout the town
• Rezone properties along NC 73 and north of Griffith Street to Employment Center (EC) Planning Area
• Prioritize transportation and enhancement projects in the transit station area
• Implement a special tax district (Tax Increment Financing or Special Assessment District) to finance projects in the downtown and transit area

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The downtown should be promoted as a regional tourism destination. Greenfield mixed use or commercial centers, north of downtown and along NC 73, will continue to build-out. Davidson will be well positioned to support businesses of all sizes and industry types. Economic development should provide a full range of local employment opportunities for residents.

• Aggressively promote the downtown as a destination and employment center
• Develop an artist incubator center in the downtown area
• Integrate events and marketing for both downtown and Exit 30 area
• Research, implement and monitor models and metrics of economic development
• Promote college-oriented and college-owned businesses downtown
• Continue to support the Main Street program
• Support and expand hotel and conferencing capabilities
• Acquire or gain control of land for economic development
• Provide sewer to the areas north of town to enable mixed use development
• Promote Davidson as the premier cycling and outdoor recreation destination
• Promote Davidson’s historic resources and Davidson College as a regional destination
• Promote local farms and food markets as agri-tourism
• Market the town’s character, identity and quality of life to corporate executives
• Encourage Davidson College alumni to open businesses in Davidson

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**

**Short-Term Recommendations:** Davidson should work with regional, state and federal agencies to create “green jobs” through new incentives and policies. The town should also prepare for future industries by starting small with pilot projects, new policies, incubators and marketing.

• Market Davidson as a model for K-12 education, civic involvement, and active living
• Initiate the Fit Davidson pilot program and consider a similar town-wide implementation
• Adopt economic incentives and land use policies that encourage agricultural use of farmland
• Research incentives for energy-efficient businesses

**Ongoing Initiatives:** As economic opportunities in Davidson increase, the residential population will become diverse and require a variety of employment choices. The town should encourage business owners to be strong community partners and environmental stewards. New employment centers will build on sites along major highways.

• Support local incubators focusing on energy-efficient businesses
• Provide jobs for a variety of skill-sets, including disabled persons and low-income residents
• Research ways for businesses to sell by-products as raw materials to other local employers
• Connect businesses with adjacent neighborhoods
• Develop the NC 73 corridor as a green, light industrial/office center
• Recruit bio-technology, medical, and social research firms

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Encourage Small and Independent Businesses**

• There is an advertising campaign to shop local, an inventory of existing businesses, a database of vacant office and retail spaces, and a program to champion small businesses town-wide.
• Independent and specialty retail has been encouraged downtown and around Exit 30.
• Progress has been made in supporting small businesses by sharing office support services, marketing success
stories, providing meeting spaces, and encouraging mentorship opportunities.

- So far no loans or mini-grants have been provided for small businesses.

**Goal 2: Encourage Economic Growth that Supports Local Assets and Policies**

- Town staff and local realtors meet regularly, businesses are licensed to collect baseline employment information, there is an economic development advisory committee and a staff position to oversee economic development, and transportation and enhancement projects are prioritized around the proposed transit station.
- Marketing of downtown, Exit 30 and the town’s character, identity, and quality of life is strong.
- College-oriented and college-owned businesses are promoted downtown and the Main Street Program is still supported.
- Progress has been made in streamlining the development approval process, creating and implementing specific economic goals, and rezoning properties along NC 73 and north of Griffith St.
- Progress has also been made on the ongoing goals of researching, implementing and monitoring models and metrics of economic development, supporting hotel and conference capabilities, acquiring land for development, providing sewer, promoting Davidson as a destination for cycling, outdoor recreation, agri-tourism, education, and historic resources.

**Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries**

- Davidson is marketed as a model for education, civic involvement, and active living.
- Progress has been made in supporting local incubators focusing on energy-efficient businesses and providing jobs for a variety of skill-sets, including persons with disabilities and low-income residents.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

+ Work with major employers and Davidson College to ensure all employees are receiving a living wage and access to basic benefits
+ Consider passing a living wage ordinance that would require businesses that enter into contract with the Town of Davidson to provide their full-time employees with wages that would allow them to live within Davidson according to Davidson’s cost of living or consumer price index. Work with representatives within the Charlotte region to pass similar ordinances
+ Form interdepartmental teams to look at a) environmental sustainability and economic development opportunities, b) increased public art, housing for artists, and economic development and c) increased agricultural, agri-tourism, urban agriculture, and access to healthy food opportunities
+ Conduct a survey/study of where people live and work and determine the work/housing balance for Davidson in comparison to surrounding communities

**Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food and Energy Use**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Vast majority of town residents drive to work for an average of 25 minutes
- Regional interest in expanding Interstate 77
- Strong support for Davidson Farmers Market and local farming industry
- Insufficient parking downtown for business and future transit

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Thousands of Davidson residents drive alone to work 25 miles or more each way, not unlike many residents from neighboring towns and counties. Davidson residents should be encouraged to take advantage of existing transit services and coordinate carpooling in order to reduce personal fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, reduce road congestion, and improve air quality. Local leaders and officials should continue
working with regional partners to expedite commuter rail service to the north Mecklenburg County area.

- Create a transit rider orientation or mentoring program
- Adopt a local station area plan that includes easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Improve pedestrian facilities at current bus stops
- Work with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line
- Establish land development incentives and policies to encourage higher densities near transit stations

**Ongoing Initiatives**: Mentoring and vehicle share programs should be established, and educational materials should describe tips for sustainable commuting options. Commuter rail will make it easier for more residents and employees to reduce their dependency on motor vehicles.

- Develop a vehicle share program
- Provide sufficient transit parking downtown
- Provide shuttle routes between the rail station area and other regional destinations
- Work with the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) to maintain affordable public transportation

**Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste**

**Short-Term Recommendations**: As residents become more interested in sustainable living, local government and environmental advocacy groups should work with residents and business owners to reduce landfill waste. Increasing participation in recycling and promoting on-site composting are two initial steps to accomplish this goal.

- Require recycling bins in all residential, commercial and public buildings

**Ongoing Initiatives**: As individual property owners and residents become more engaged in waste reduction programs, larger business-owners and new industries should be encouraged to reduce solid waste.

- Create waste-to-energy loops between local and regional businesses
- Encourage use of recycled and recyclable products

**Goal 4: Reduce Individual and Corporate Energy Consumption and Promote Renewable Energy Production**

**Short-Term Recommendations**: The Town of Davidson Energy Plan identified a number of short term steps that would help reduce the community’s energy demand and encourage the production and use of renewable energy. The town’s ordinances and policies are generally supportive of energy-efficient design, but additional education and incentive programs are needed to approach energy conservation comprehensively.

- Create a resource manual for sustainable energy use, fuel sources and solid waste disposal
- Encourage energy audits of private businesses

**Ongoing Initiatives**: As the town refines its energy policies and development proposals, equal consideration should be placed on building energy efficiency as the arrangement of buildings and land uses. Local government, regional agencies, and large-scale industries should continue to monitor greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.

- Work with the local building industry to develop energy efficient building construction standards
- Promote Energy Star, LEED or similar certification for new construction
- Support use of on-site energy generation technologies
- Target businesses interested in sustainable energy production
- Work with Davidson College to jointly fund and develop sustainable energy production sites or programs
- Research policies requiring solar access in development

**Progress**

**Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation**

- Progress has been made towards adopting a station area plan, working with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line, providing sufficient parking downtown, and maintaining affordable transit opportunities.
### Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste
- Progress has been made towards requiring recycling bins, creating a waste-to-energy loop, and encouraging the use of recycled and recyclable products.

### Goal 4: Reduce Individual and Corporate Energy Consumption and Promote Renewable Energy Production
- Research has been done on requiring solar access in developments.

### Suggested Additions or Changes
- Partner with local businesses and large employers in Charlotte, and regional partners in transit and air quality to consider, create, and promote ride share programs, energy efficiency, and waste reduction programs as part of a regional sustainability initiative.
- Work with Mecklenburg County to provide education about local, state, and federal incentives or benefits to developers interested in developing in a more sustainable and energy efficient method.
- Develop a jobs program employing high school and college students and young professionals interested in creating advancements in sustainable measures, green technology, or energy efficiency.
- Conduct an inventory of energy use, recycling programs, ride share opportunities, green-cleaning programs and building characteristics (in regards to environmental implications, worker safety, and health promotion) for major employers within Davidson.

### Livability Theme: Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services

#### Conditions and Concerns
- Relatively high taxes and property values
- Imbalance between commercial and residential tax base

#### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Town staff should continue to focus on sustainable services such as tree maintenance, code enforcement, tourism management, and active living programming. New services will require new equipment and personnel.

- Measure the mix of land uses and resulting impacts on local tax revenue

**Goal 5: Establish Good Working Relationships and Firm Priorities with Regional Agencies, Utility Providers, and Adjoining Jurisdictions**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Given the importance of transportation systems, the north Mecklenburg County and south Iredell County area should continue to work closely to plan improvements to the road and transit network. In order to maintain high quality of life for Davidson residents and provide low-cost services, the town should work with its regional partners to identify creative ways to jointly serve the region’s residents.

- Market MI-Connection as an incentive to high growth industries and professional services

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The north Mecklenburg County and south Iredell County area should continue to work toward good connectivity within the larger region, primarily through well-planned transportation networks and communication systems. The town should support the construction of two-lane roads and multi-modal streets with the understanding that some rural roads may require three to four lanes or controlled access. Utility companies will continue to control significant amounts of property, so Davidson and its neighbors should meet with utilities on a regular basis to ensure compatibility with local plans.

- Ensure that MI-Connection is the premier communications and broadband provider in the region

### Progress

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**
- Progress has been made in measuring the mix of land uses and resulting impacts on local tax revenue.

**Goal 5: Establish Good Working Relationships and Firm Priorities with Regional Agencies, Utility Providers, and Adjoining Jurisdictions**
- Progress has been made on marketing MI-Connection as an incentive to high growth industries and professional services.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

+ Determine how many households and businesses within Davidson use MI-Connection, how many residents are employed by MI-Connection, and whether or not MI-Connection played a role in attracting new businesses to locate in Davidson
+ Ensure that MI-Connection offers its full-time employees a living wage
+ Take health and safety costs into consideration when analyzing impacts on local tax revenue and expenses associated with the mixture of residential and commercial properties

**Livability Theme: Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Conflict between demands for moderate density infill development and preservation of downtown character
- Possible competition between downtown and Exit 30
- Inconsistent design standards between franchise and corporate prototypes and context sensitive design
- Perception that development approval process is inefficient

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* In keeping with the Targeted Growth Plan described in Chapter 4 of the comprehensive plan, the town should establish the downtown and village area (older surrounding neighborhoods) as the highest priority for infill, redevelopment and mixed use. The town should develop an incentive package to encourage this type of growth over the next ten years.

- Consider opportunities for joint use or ownership of underutilized buildings or space
- Remove barriers to development in the Village Center Planning Area
- Prepare construction documents and seek funding for a parking deck in the downtown area

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Transit will spur development in the downtown, and residents will need to be reassured that new development is in keeping with the comprehensive plan. The town should continue to monitor parking and vehicle congestion in the downtown area and ensure adequate levels of service.

- Design flexible spaces in the downtown area to accommodate various uses
- Accommodate generous densities for mixed use development near downtown and the transit station
- Provide additional mixed use centers close to existing neighborhoods
- Redevelop vacant or underutilized properties in the downtown
- Make construction of downtown and surrounding road connections or improvements a top priority

**Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context**

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The town should allocate significant staff time to code enforcement and neighborhood communications as new developments mature. Developers should be encouraged to meet regularly with surrounding property owners to discuss nuisance issues and any emerging environmental concerns during construction. The town should continue to support regional transportation and conservation initiatives.

- Coordinate the downtown and Exit 30 areas with compatible development
- Avoid redundant and distracting signage
- Minimize outdoor lighting glare possibly through a model dark sky lighting ordinance
- Minimize noise pollution
- Promote the use of green and local materials in new development
- Coordinate new development proposals with approved small area plans
- Consider rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve to better regulate the timing and type of development
- Consider ways commercial business can be both pedestrian-oriented and senior-friendly
- Continue discourage franchise architecture

### Progress

**Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas**
- Progress has been made in considering opportunities for joint use or ownership, removing barriers to development, increasing parking, designing flexible spaces, accommodating density, providing additional mixed use centers, redeveloping vacant properties, and making downtown a top priority.

**Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context**
- Davidson discourages franchise architecture.
- Progress has been made to coordinate the Downtown and Exit 30 areas with compatible development, avoid redundant and distracting signage, coordinate new development proposals with approved small area plans, consider rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve, and consider ways commercial businesses can be pedestrian-oriented and senior-friendly.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Work with NCDOT and business owners to consider lighting ordinance to balance “light pollution” with safety for pedestrians and enhanced natural surveillance of property
+ Partner with Mecklenburg County to provide education on sources of green and local materials for development and how building materials can be re-used or properly disposed of
+ Update small area plans in areas of recent development, property rezoning, exchange in ownership, or expected large-scale development in accordance with any major changes in the planning ordinance
+ Develop guidelines and plans for construction in neighborhood centers to encourage development of economic centers close to residential areas - include affordable housing options within these centers such as studios or condos above commercial areas
+ Identify vacant lots or underutilized buildings and develop plans for them and recruit developers to undertake redevelopment
Completeness of Neighborhoods

Health Impacts
- Increased physical activity
- Reduced air emissions
- Greater social cohesion
- Improved neighborhood safety
- Improved mental health

Livability Themes
- Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods
- Encourage Committed Civic Involvement and Responsibility
- Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity
- Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food and Energy Use
- Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services
- Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles

Description of Component

A complete neighborhood includes a variety of destinations within a comfortable walking distance from residents. This includes businesses to meet daily needs such as a grocery store, restaurant/cafe, and pharmacy. It also includes access to public spaces such as neighborhood parks and public buildings such as the library, Town Hall, or schools. A complete transportation network (complete streets, transit access, and connectivity of streets) within a neighborhood is also essential to allow safe travel within the neighborhood and connections to other parts of town (see Map 27). Convenient and safe access to popular destinations within or close to the neighborhood promotes physical activity, reduces vehicle miles traveled and increases neighborhood cohesion and safety.2

Current Conditions (2014)

Neighborhood Park Requirements in Developments

According to the planning ordinance, every new residence has to be within ¼ mile of a neighborhood park. These parks are open to the public, built by developers, and maintained by the Town. Neighborhood parks are at least a half acre of contiguous land and provide a variety of recreational opportunities including open play spaces, dog parks, playgrounds, natural areas, picnic sites, walking trails, and gathering spaces. Each park has to have a drinking fountain and public access by a sidewalk, street, or alley.33

Schools

Davidson Elementary School is the only public school within Davidson and is part of the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System. Hough High and Bailey Middle School are both in Cornelius and serve as public schools for students in North Mecklenburg. Other educational institutes serving Davidson include: the Community School of Davidson (Charter), Davidson Day School, Lake Norman Christian School, Phoenix Montessori Academy, Davidson Green School, Pine Lake (Charter, Iredell), Woodlawn (Iredell), and the Cannon School (Cabarrus County).
Library

The library in Davidson is part of the larger Charlotte Mecklenburg Library System and is located on the Town Green which is the figurative and geographical center of the Town of Davidson. The library is open Monday through Thursday 10 A.M. to 8 P.M. and Friday and Saturday 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. In the past the town has fought to maintain a local branch in Davidson instead of combining with Cornelius and Huntersville for a larger regional branch.

Childcare

The Davidson Cornelius Child Development Center is located on the corner of Jetton St. and Gamble St. in close proximity to many neighborhoods and Ada Jenkins. The daycare center offers subsidized rates and has been supported through small grants from Cornelius and Davidson for several years.

Mode/Time Spent Commuting

The majority of workers 16 years and over in Davidson commute alone by personal vehicle (74%). Of the remaining 1,245 people, 6.8% carpool, 1.4% take public transportation, 6.8% walk or bike, and 10.7% work from home. The mean travel time to work is 23 minutes.

Trips by Bicycle or Walking

As part of the active transportation plan, it was determined that citizens of Davidson make over 985,000 trips by bicycle or walking each year- that is roughly 90 trips per person. It has also been estimated that over 740,000 vehicle miles have been saved through active transportation. By walking or biking instead of driving, it is estimated that Davidson generates over $700,000 annually in environmental, social and health savings.
Map 27: Mixed Use Areas in Davidson

The Davidson Comprehensive Plan describes the vision for future development by the Targeted Growth Plan. The Targeted Growth Plan is based on criteria for development set by the Davidson Board and the city’s goals and recommendations.

Davidson’s zoning jurisdiction is divided into three growth reserve areas: the Village Area, Smart Suburban, and the Rural Area. Within each growth reserve, primary and secondary targets for future development are identified, as well as areas for transportation and conservation and farming.

The primary and secondary growth targets are described as one of four types: Village Center (Downtown Davidson), a large civic and mixed-use center; Regional Commercial Centers (highly visible and accessible mixed-use centers); Employment Centers (office, industrial, or service job centers); or Neighborhood Service Centers (small residential-support retail uses). Actual target locations and land uses may change based on current trends, but all will be designed as walkable, mixed-use settings.
Livability Theme: Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Limited funding sources for public art and landscape enhancements
- Strong interest in strengthening the downtown core as the heart of Davidson
- Lack of public community and neighborhood gathering spaces
- Growing interest in public art
- Increasing inventory of undeveloped town or county owned properties
- Strong support for community policing and home security check programs

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 3: Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks and Greenways**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Local police officers and other town staff should focus on public education and enforcement initiatives to establish an environment where motorists, cyclists and pedestrians are expected to exercise caution and courtesy while sharing the roads. Planners should focus their efforts on identifying and prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects for future funding and revising design policies to ensure that all user groups can safely use local streets. Local and county agencies should continue to acquire land for future parks and greenways, and apply for grants to improve existing park facilities.

- Prioritize public traffic calming projects
- Conduct an inventory of informal trails in the town and ETJ and incorporate into public network
- Educate the public about the “rules of the road” for all users
- Create a bicycle and greenways network map
- Create a pedestrian access and mobility plan
- Clearly define greenways as off-road multi-use paths in the planning ordinance
- Improve crosswalk and lane marking visibility
- Establish Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines
- Consider traffic access management policies such as limited driveways along major roads
- Consider revisions to guidelines to provide more senior-friendly streetscapes and public spaces
- Limit driveway curb cuts along major roads and bike paths
- Evaluate existing land use context, safety concerns and speed limits on all state and local streets

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Additional residential and commercial development will bring more visitors and residents, and the town should work diligently to build safer streets, parks and greenways. The town should ensure the proper bike and pedestrian facility design is considered during any resurfacing, restriping, or road repair projects. Neighborhood organizations should emphasize public safety by hosting outdoor social events and implementing creative traffic calming along busy streets. Police officers will become partners with neighborhood organizations to be more proactive in crime prevention. The town should also continue to maintain bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- Build sidewalks, especially where gaps exist
- Continue to promote bicycle, pedestrian, and bus travel to local schools with necessary support and amenities, such as bike racks and crossing guards
- Build off-road greenways, trails, and bike improvement projects per the bicycle master plan
- Fund traffic calming and street connectivity projects
- Establish regular cleaning and maintenance policies for bicycle facilities, sidewalks, greenways and streets
- Plan and construct intersection improvements to provide safer and less congested regional travel
- Create safe environments where parents and youth can safely exercise independence
- Establish community responsibility for children’s safety
- Improve Fisher Farm’s visibility as a regional destination
Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities

**Short-Term Recommendations:** Parks should include the most innovative, sustainable and accessible park design features and amenities. Residents and elected officials need to balance active and passive recreational needs by considering growth pressure, impacts on the natural environment, and the increasingly diverse population. Policies should be developed for residents to become active participants in the design and improvement of publicly-owned properties.

- Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Update definitions of various park-types to require appropriate types of seating, trash receptacles, bike racks, lighting, public art, and landscaping
- Promote building community and urban gardens on public properties
- Incorporate community gardens in neighborhood/community park requirements

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Well-designed public gathering spaces and park facilities should be constructed, with priority given to the downtown followed by outlying neighborhoods and developments. Park design should respond to resident needs, informed by community surveys and demographic analysis. The management of public properties should also respond to the surrounding land use context and environmental concerns. As a variety of park facilities and recreation programs are established, Davidson will become a popular regional destination for ecologists and educators, outdoor enthusiasts, and sports competitors. The town should consider ways to maximize the economic opportunities of tourism while balancing that with the needs of local residents. Environmental advocates and youth clubs should embrace their role as stewards of natural parks by educating the public about natural resources, providing recreational programs and helping to maintain the facilities.

- Preserve in-town green spaces and corridors ideal for recreational play and neighborhood gathering spaces
- Ensure that every resident (within incorporated areas) is within ¼ mile of a public park and greenway access
- Build parks and community facilities that provide opportunities for local youth (middle and high school students)
- Provide more unstructured play or gathering spaces, especially in underserved neighborhoods
- Establish a regular volunteer maintenance schedule for local trails and neighborhood gathering spaces
- Maintain access and safety of local connections between neighborhoods and local parks

**Progress**

Goal 3: Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks and Greenways

- A bicycle and greenways network map, a pedestrian access and mobility plan, and revisions to guidelines to provide more senior-friendly streetscapes and public spaces have been made.
- Driveway curb cuts have been limited and land use context, safety concerns and speed limits have been evaluated.
- Progress has been made on prioritizing public traffic calming projects, educating the public about the rules of the road, clearly defining greenways within the planning ordinance, improving crosswalk and lane marking visibility, and considering traffic access management policies.
- Progress has also been made in: building sidewalks; promoting bicycle, pedestrian, and bus travel to school; building greenways, trails and bike improvement projects; funding traffic calming and street connectivity projects; establishing a regular cleaning and maintenance policy for bicycle facilities, sidewalks, greenways and streets; creating safe environments for youth; establishing community responsibility for children’s safety; and improving Fisher Farm’s visibility.

Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities

- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan has been updated including updating the definitions of various park-types to require certain facilities.
- Progress has been made on preserving in-town green spaces and corridors, ensuring every resident is within a ¼ mile of a public park or greenway access, building parks and community facilities for local youth, providing unstructured play or gathering spaces, and maintaining access and safety of local
connections between neighborhoods and local parks.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

- Develop neighborhood watch or neighborhood associations to promote safety, neighborhood cohesion, and maintenance of property and shared spaces within the neighborhood
- Create bike boulevards and marked bicycle and pedestrian routes through neighborhood streets including mileage to popular destinations
- Make a concerted effort to include youth and older adults within park planning, especially in planning the facilities, anticipated programs, and connections to (sidewalks, bike paths, etc.) neighborhood parks

**Livability Theme: Encourage Committed Civic Involvement and Responsibility**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Improving college-town relationship
- Heavily involved citizenry, especially long-time residents, in local government decision-making
- Highly educated residents
- Increasing availability of volunteers
- Strong support for the Ada Jenkins Center
- Popular regional events
- Commitment to “open government” and good public communication

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 1: Build Relationships with and among the Various Public and Private Schools**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Davidson has attracted a number and variety of schools. The community should continue to expand high quality educational opportunities for youth of all ages, pre-school to post-secondary. Elected officials should lead the way in supporting collaboration and communication between local schools.

- Evaluate local ordinances regarding school facilities

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Local educators, retired educators, and local volunteers should create a consortium to share resources and develop a model for integrating community in schools. Significant growth in the student population will require construction of new schools. These schools should be integrated within neighborhoods and accessible by foot, bike and public transit.

- Work with CMS to reserve property for future public schools
- Ensure future schools remain within walking distance of neighborhoods
- Encourage residents to attend CMS North Learning Community meetings and stay involved in the public schools
- Create a volunteer clearinghouse of available classroom assistants, mentors, tutors, and test proctors
- Discourage dividing local public school students into different districts
- Continue to provide quality and accessible K-12 education
- Study projected elementary, middle and high school student growth and the implications to facility planning

**Goal 2: Sustain and Promote More Resident Volunteerism and Involvement**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Town staff should spend considerable time with residents of all ages and interests during public meetings. Local advisory boards should become more engaged and influential on short-term and long-term decisions. The town should consider ways to promote existing volunteer groups while promoting town-sponsored volunteer activities. Communication between neighborhoods, officials and town staff should continue to improve.

- Create volunteer sidewalk/trail/bike facility maintenance policies
- Create a neighborhood phone tree for disaster/ emergency response
- Avoid using terms such as “West Davidson” or “Townie” to refer to neighborhoods or residents
Create a clearinghouse of volunteer contacts, skill sets, interests, availability, etc.

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Neighborhood organizations should continue to form and become stronger advocates for good land development and other local government decisions. Academia and advocates for civic participation and leadership will come to Davidson to study new techniques. Neighborhood groups and community organizations should look for opportunities to partner with local government given the limited resources of local government.

- Continue “road shows” to neighborhoods
- Establish and develop neighborhood ambassadors or block captains
- Establish a welcome committee for new Davidson residents
- Continue and improve the Civics 101 program
- Sponsor community dinners or other events that support local identity
- Design local events, such as Town Day, to promote more local vendors and volunteerism

**Goal 4: Improve Relationships Between Government, Non-Profit and Citizen-Led Grassroots Organizations**

**Short-Term Recommendations:** The town should explain the goals of the Comprehensive Plan to local nonprofit organizations and other government agencies. Local government and community organization budgets should include funding to implement goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

- Assemble past and present advisory board members, advocacy groups and elected officials to discuss roles, strategies, and funding opportunities related to the Comprehensive Plan
- Monitor charitable giving trends locally and regionally
- Continue to leverage private donations with public grants and in-kind support to implement public projects

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Citizens should be empowered to promote the goals of the comprehensive plan, including but not limited to fundraising, recruiting business, and improving public spaces with public art and landscaping. Large-scale public art and corridor enhancement visions will be realized with a combination of public and private financial support.

- Maintain and support the public library and all public institutions
- Continue to support and provide technical assistance to advocacy and nonprofit organizations
- Establish a fund or organization to sponsor community projects or initiatives
- Support the establishment of other local advocacy and nonprofit organizations

**Goal 5: Provide Support and Space for Churches, Religious Institutions, Childcare Services, and Community Centers**

**Short-Term Recommendations:** As the population grows, there will likely be more demand for government, religious space, childcare, and recreation centers. The town should consider ways to accommodate public meetings and events in new government facility plans.

- Locate future government offices or police and fire stations in neighborhoods or mixed use settings
- Require space for community gathering or religious activities in all major developments
- Continue to recognize and support the community services provided by churches and other religious organizations
- Maintain good relationships between elected officials and religious leaders
- Evaluate availability of quality childcare options in Davidson

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Davidson should become an example for walkable, mixed use development integrating new church campuses, schools, and community centers within the overall land use context.

- Ensure that quality and affordable preschool, afterschool and childcare alternatives are available in the town or within close proximity
- Partner with local churches and non-governmental organizations to provide community services and meeting space
- Encourage churches to be physically integrated within the immediate neighborhood
- Plan for a significant community center within close proximity to downtown
## Progress

### Goal 1: Build Relationships with and among the Various Public and Private Schools
- Residents are encouraged to attend CMS North Learning Community meetings and stay involved in the public schools and quality and accessible K-12 education is provided.
- Progress has been made in evaluating local ordinances regarding school facilities, working with CMS to reserve property for future schools, ensuring schools remain within walking distance of neighborhoods, and studying project student growth and the implications to facility planning.

### Goal 2: Sustain and Promote More Resident Volunteerism and Involvement
- The Town has an emergency response system, community dinners, local events, and a welcome committee for new Davidson residents.
- Davidson also avoids terms such as “West Davidson” or “Townie.”
- Progress has been made in continuing neighborhood “road shows”, establishing neighborhood ambassadors, and continuing Civics 101.

### Goal 4: Improve Relationships Between Government, Non-Profit and Citizen-Led Grassroots Organizations
- Progress has been made in leveraging private donations, grants, and in-kind support to implement public projects.
- Davidson maintains a public library, provides technical assistance to advocacy and nonprofit organizations and supports the establishment of additional organizations.

### Goal 5: Provide Support and Space for Churches, Religious Institutions, Childcare Services, and Community Centers
- Progress has been made in locating future government offices and stations in neighborhoods or mixed use settings; requiring community gathering spaces in all major developments, recognizing and supporting the community services provided by churches, and partnering with churches and other non-governmental organizations for meeting space and community services.
- Progress has been made in evaluating the availability of childcare in Davidson and ensuring quality preschool, afterschool, and childcare alternatives are available.

### Suggested Additions or Changes
+ Work with schools to manage traffic during peak hours and re-establish the walking school buses and biking to school
+ Encourage the continued use of neighborhood school buildings as schools or centers of civic activity similar to the use of Ada Jenkins
+ Consider developing healthy school zones prohibiting fast food outlets, liquor or smoking stores, or unhealthy convenient stores from locating within a quarter mile of schools
+ Provide a staff liaison to schools trying to develop a healthy school program or incorporate health initiatives into their policies and programs
+ Publicize and help coordinate community-wide school drives to help provide needed supplies and volunteers for school activities
+ Increase opportunities for private investments in public events or features such as public art/ adopting a greenway etc.
+ Encourage the establishment of a nonprofit leaders’ network
+ Partner with developers to include public buildings- churches, meeting centers, schools- within large neighborhood developments

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### Livability Theme: Promote Cultural, Socioeconomic and Age Diversity

#### Conditions and Concerns
- Shrinking or insufficient affordable housing stock, especially rental units
- Few alternative housing sites available
• Decreasing racial diversity
• Strong family connections within African-American communities
• More consideration for aging population, including design of housing and transportation amenities

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups

Short-Term Recommendations: The town should require housing and commercial development appropriate for occupants of all ages and abilities. Davidson should be promoted as an ideal place for entrepreneurs, minorities and new graduates to start or relocate their businesses. The town should also celebrate and fully support the needs of teenagers and young adults.

- Amend ordinances to permit co-housing, cottage housing, and other housing alternatives
- Require universal design specifications as a percentage of total housing units in future developments
- Provide more recreational programs and opportunities that are directed at teens, young adults, and young professionals
- Continue to support and promote youth team sports, scout troops, and other youth activities
- Include aging-in-place responsibilities as part of a town staff position

Ongoing Initiatives: Developers and town staff should encourage young professionals to move into Davidson’s new mixed use centers. Meanwhile, the town should expect more retirees and senior residents to increase the average age of the population. The population at build-out will be less dependent on local services such as schools and lawn care. Older residents should be active in local politics, volunteer organizations, and business leadership.

- Encourage retail businesses and entertainment venues that attract young professionals and families
- Create an artists-in-residence program
- Increase lifelong educational opportunities
- Develop flexible and affordable senior housing

Goal 2: Provide a Full Range of Services and Opportunities for All Socioeconomic Groups

Short-Term Recommendations: The town should continue requiring affordable housing in all new residential developments and research ways to maintain affordability of older homes near the downtown. Town staff and advocates should also continue to promote the benefits of socioeconomic diversity.

- Clarify the roles and eligibility process of the Davidson Housing Coalition and the town’s affordable housing program
- Provide free or low-cost personal finance classes
- Evaluate the need for a local urgent care center and expanded health care facilities

Ongoing Initiatives: Recognizing that many of Davidson’s residents will continue to commute to work, affordable housing within close proximity of the transit station will be critical to quality of life and the success of commuter rail. Additional programs should also be established to support low to moderate income families for non-housing needs. Public transit should connect low and moderate income families to all major neighborhood, civic and commercial centers.

- Prevent net loss in the number of existing affordable houses and neighborhoods
- Market affordable housing opportunities to teachers and other service providers
- Collaborate with Davidson College to improve relationships between off-campus student residents and neighboring residents
- Promote rental and high-density affordable housing
- Locate affordable housing throughout the community
- Work with local farmers and markets to provide health food choices for all economic groups
- Encourage cooperatives for food, childcare and housing
Goal 3: Increase Racial Diversity in the Town

Short-Term Recommendations: Davidson’s African-American community and rich cultural heritage should be promoted to encourage individuals of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds to move to or remain in the town. Long-time residents should be encouraged to lead this effort by developing relationships with local youth and newcomers.

- Identify and provide services and activities that support minorities of all ages and income levels
- Create a mentoring program for local youth, especially minorities
- Encourage minority-oriented performances and vendors to participate at town-sponsored events

Ongoing Initiatives: Local leaders should promote diversity and inclusiveness throughout all neighborhoods, businesses and organizations. The town should recruit more local businesses and entertainment services oriented toward a range of minority and socioeconomic groups.

- Encourage minority-owned and minority-oriented businesses
- Identify small business opportunities that serve minority communities
- Promote Davidson as a venue for regional minority artists
- Encourage young residents of various races to pursue civic leadership roles

Progress

Goal 1: Encourage Development and Activities that Attract a Variety of Age Groups

- Ordinances have been amended to permit co-housing, cottage housing, and other housing alternatives and aging-in-place is included within the responsibilities of town staff.
- Progress has been made on requiring universal design, providing more recreational programs and opportunities for teens, young adults, and young professionals, and youth team sports, scout troops and other youth activities are supported.
- The number of lifelong educational opportunities have increased.
- Progress has been made in encouraging retail businesses and entertainment venues that attract young professionals and families as well as developing flexible and affordable senior housing.

Goal 2: Provide a Full Range of Services and Opportunities for All Socioeconomic Groups

- The roles and eligibility process of the Davidson Housing Coalition and the town’s affordable housing program have been clarified, affordable housing opportunities have been marketed to teachers and other service providers and affordable housing opportunities are available throughout the community.
- Progress has been made in providing free or low-cost personal finance classes, preventing the net loss in the number of existing affordable houses and neighborhoods, and promoting rental and high-density affordable housing.
- The need for a local urgent care center and expanded health care facilities has been evaluated.

Goal 3: Increase Racial Diversity in the Town

- Minority-oriented performances and vendors are encouraged to participate at town-sponsored events.
- Progress has been made in identifying and providing services and activities that support minorities of all ages and income levels including creating a mentoring program for local youth, especially minorities, encouraging minority-owned and minority-oriented businesses, identifying small business opportunities that serve minority communities and encouraging young residents of all races to pursue civic leadership roles.

Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Support the “village” approach to providing senior services
+ Work with partners to offer additional senior recreational programs including social, educational, and physical activity opportunities
+ Market to firms that appeal to young professionals such as high tech industries, social media, microbreweries, etc.
+ Provide affordable housing opportunities near commercial and transit centers to make car-free living a viable option—especially for those in the service industry
+ Increase social activities for single professionals or retirees in Davidson
+ Include ethnic as well as racial diversity and expand efforts beyond supporting Davidson’s historic African American neighborhood to include promoting a diversity of cultures through events, centers of activity, restaurants, and markets
+ Increase multi-generational opportunities in housing, recreational programs, educational activities, mentorship programs etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food and Energy Use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditions and Concerns</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vast majority of town residents drive to work for an average of 25 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Strong local commitment to street connectivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• No planning document that specifically addresses pedestrian accessibility and safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Multiple cycling, running, and sports-recreation clubs and organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Interest in making streets and public spaces senior-friendly and accessible</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Goals and Recommendations</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Short-Term Recommendations</em>: As the costs of owning and driving motor vehicles increase, residents will become more interested in walking and using bicycles for local trips. However, the majority of residents do not feel safe sharing the roads or know enough about local pedestrian or bicycle networks to make efficient use of them. Town staff and local pedestrian and cycling advocates should continue to educate residents about the benefits of cycling and walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide bicycle storage, changing facilities, and increased bicycle parking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sign bicycle and walking routes on low traffic neighborhood streets</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Short-Term Recommendations</em>: Thousands of Davidson residents drive alone to work 25 miles or more each way, not unlike many residents from neighboring towns and counties. Davidson residents should be encouraged to take advantage of existing transit services and coordinate carpooling in order to reduce personal fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, reduce road congestion, and improve air quality. Local leaders and officials should continue working with regional partners to expedite commuter rail service to the north Mecklenburg County area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adopt a local station area plan that includes easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve pedestrian facilities at current bus stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish land development incentives and policies to encourage higher densities near transit stations</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Short-Term Recommendations</em>: Davidson should focus on providing easy and affordable access to local or regional food sources. Open space within the town limits are opportunities for community gardening and sustainable land management. Land development policies should be evaluated for how well they support agriculture and food production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage homeowners associations to create community gardens in common open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage urban food production and pocket gardens on public property</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Ongoing Initiatives</strong>: Davidson should consider ways to ensure the success of the Davidson Farmer’s Market and other local agricultural distribution networks. The Rural Planning Area should be promoted as a prime location for small to medium-sized working farms.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage agricultural use of open space land in residential subdivisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Progress

Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel
- Progress has been made in providing bicycle storage, changing facilities, and increased bicycle parking.

Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation
- Progress has been made in adopting a local station area plan that includes easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists and working with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line.

Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods
- Progress has been made in encouraging homeowners associations to create community gardens in common open space.

Suggested Additions or Changes
+ Combine land use and transportation planning efforts to create livable and human-oriented areas where transportation routes meet the needs of existing and future land uses
+ Address the potential for gentrification in neighborhoods as a result of future developments or transit investments
+ Work with private entities to offer car share programs such as Zip Car
+ Identify vacant lots for temporary or permanent agricultural purposes
+ Encourage tool and seed share stations in residential neighborhoods

Livability Theme: Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services

Conditions and Concerns
- Good working relationships with Mecklenburg County for environmental regulation, emergency management, parks and recreation, law enforcement, and water/wastewater utilities
- General resident satisfaction in quality of local services
- Relatively high taxes and property values
- Imbalance between commercial and residential tax base
- Growing demand for new and increased public services and staffing
- Decentralized parks and recreation programs and activities
- Perceived demand for additional and more diverse recreation programs

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services
Short-Term Recommendations: All departments should strive to be recognized as leaders in their respective fields. As residents seek to achieve more sustainable and healthy lifestyles, town services should respond accordingly. The town should grow its portfolio of services by expanding existing and building new partnerships with affiliated agencies and service providers.
- Coordinate local parks and recreation activities with regional agencies, the Ada Jenkins Center, neighboring jurisdictions and Davidson College

Ongoing Initiatives: Town staff should continue to focus on sustainable services such as tree maintenance, code enforcement, tourism management, and active living programming. New services will require new equipment and personnel.
- Continue to create and reevaluate small area plans
- Provide sufficient funds for park maintenance
- Measure the mix of land uses and resulting impacts on local tax revenue
### Progress

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**
- Local parks and recreation activities have been coordinated with regional agencies, the Ada Jenkins Center, neighboring jurisdictions, and Davidson College.
- Progress has been made on creating and reevaluating small area plans, providing sufficient funds for park maintenance, and measuring the mix of land uses and resulting impacts on local tax revenue.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Encourage developers and facilitate the development of mix-use neighborhoods or neighborhood centers with cafés, corner markets, office space, and public buildings (similar to St. Albans)
+ Continue and increase public outreach on the trash and recycling schedules and requests to not block sidewalks or bike lanes
+ Work with neighborhoods to implement storm-water management measures such as keeping drains clear and installing rain gardens
+ Partner with landowners to construct and maintain additional sidewalks particularly where gaps exist and in older neighborhoods
+ Work with neighbors to develop neighborhood parks that have their own unique character and meet the needs of residents of that particular neighborhood

### Conditions and Concerns

**Livability Theme: Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions and Concerns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No annexation agreements between Davidson and Mooresville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restriction against extending rural sewer lines has limited rural residential growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-density residential development potential in the rural area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict between demands for moderate infill development and preservation of downtown character</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perception that development approval process is inefficient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong commitment to design review</td>
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### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas**

**Short-Term Recommendations:** In keeping with the Targeted Growth Plan described in Chapter 4 of the comprehensive plan, the town should establish the downtown and village area (older surrounding neighborhoods) as the highest priority for infill, redevelopment and mixed use. The town should develop an incentive package to encourage this type of growth over the next ten years.

- Continue to allow for limited single-family infill development and redevelopment in the Village Infill Planning Area
- Consider opportunities for joint use or ownership of underutilized buildings or space
- Remove barriers to development in the Village Center Planning Area

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Transit will spur development in the downtown, and residents will need to be reassured that new development is in keeping with the comprehensive plan. The town should continue to monitor parking and vehicle congestion in the downtown area and ensure adequate levels of service.

- Encourage residential development, especially workforce and rental housing above commercial uses in the Village Center Planning Area
- Design flexible spaces in the downtown area to accommodate various uses
- Accommodate generous densities for mixed use development near downtown and the transit station
- Provide additional mixed use centers close to existing neighborhoods
- Redevelop vacant or underutilized properties in the downtown
• Make construction of downtown and surrounding road connections or improvements a top priority

**Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context**

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The town should allocate significant staff time to code enforcement and neighborhood communications as new developments mature. Developers should be encouraged to meet regularly with surrounding property owners to discuss nuisance issues and any emerging environmental concerns during construction. The town should continue to support regional transportation and conservation initiatives.

- Coordinate the downtown and Exit 30 areas with compatible development
- Coordinate new development proposals with approved small area plans
- Consider rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve to better regulate the timing and type of development

**Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town should update ordinances for the Rural Planning Area to encourage cluster development and rural viewshed preservation. New road connections or improvements should be carefully planned to minimize negative impact on sensitive natural assets, active farmland, and anticipated land use development.

- Consider rezoning rural properties to current use
- Create design guidelines for the Rural Planning Area
- Consider ways to make farmhouse cluster and conservation subdivisions viable options in the rural area
- Investigate agriburbs (farm-centered neighborhoods) and co-housing as possible options for rural subdivision models

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The town should consider best practices for well-timed annexation and utility extensions in the rural area. The town should also work with state and regional agencies to provide incentives to rural property owners and farmers to continue agricultural activities. Development centers should have distinct edges, but intensities and land uses should transition from the urban core to agricultural and natural settings.

- Develop an annexation plan
- Research and implement appropriate applications of urban growth boundaries and transfer of development rights
- Discourage moderate density and dispersed development in the rural area
- Preserve active farmland
- Continue to control future sewer extensions in the rural area
- Increase road connectivity in developed areas in order to minimize the need for new rural roads

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas**

- Progress has been made in encouraging infill development and redevelopment in the Village Infill Planning Area, considering opportunities for joint use or ownership of underutilized buildings or space, and removing barriers to development in the Village Center Planning Area.
- Progress has also been made on ongoing initiatives including encouraging residential development in the Village Center Planning Area, designing flexible spaces in downtown, accommodating generous densities near downtown and the transit station, providing additional mixed use centers, redeveloping vacant properties downtown, and prioritizing development downtown and surrounding road connections.

**Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context**

- Progress has been made in coordinating development around downtown and Exit 30, coordinating new development proposals with approved small area plans, and considering rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve to better regulate the timing and type of development.

**Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape**

- Progress has been made on considering ways to make farmhouse cluster and conservation subdivisions viable options and investigating agri-burbs and co-housing for rural subdivision models.
- Progress has also been made on the ongoing initiatives of developing an annexation plan, discouraging moderate density and dispersed development in the rural area, and continuing to control future sewer extensions in the rural area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Additions or Changes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ Monitor and make additional pedestrian and bicycling improvements as development around the Circles at 30 continue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Establish a voluntary or historical agricultural district in the rural area and increase agricultural tourism efforts to increase awareness of Davidson’s agricultural heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Provide neighborhood commercial activities- grocery store, pharmacy, small restaurants, etc.- on the border of rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Increase the bicycle and pedestrian networks to connect the rural areas to regional parks and priority destinations</td>
</tr>
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Safe Neighborhoods and Public Spaces

Health Impacts
- Reduced crime and violence
- Greater social cohesion
- Improved mental health
- Quicker response time for emergency treatment

Livability Themes
- Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services
- Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods
- Encourage Committed Civic Involvement and Responsibility
- Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food and Energy

Description of Component
Safe neighborhoods and public spaces are free of criminal activity, attractive, and clean. Natural surveillance is promoted through a consistent flow of activity, outdoor seating, windows and porches facing the street, well-maintained vegetation, and street lighting. Instances of graffiti, broken windows, littering, and property damage are addressed quickly and public buildings, houses, yards, and public spaces are well maintained. Neighbors watch out for one another and kids can safely play outside. Safe neighborhoods and public spaces promote physical activity, increase neighborhood and community cohesion, reduce instances of violence and improve mental health, and can improve the economic and intellectual wellbeing of a community.

Current Conditions (2014)

Neighborhood Watch Programs/ National Night Out
There are three neighborhoods within Davidson that are working on creating a community watch program- Davidson Bay, the Lake Davidson Home Owners Association, and the Davidson Gateway/ South Square Townhomes. Davidson Police is working with these neighborhoods using resources from the USA on Watch program and the National Crime Prevention Council. To participate in the community watch program and receive signs, 20% of the neighborhood must agree to participate.

Davidson also participates in National Night Out every year in August. This event is coordinated by the Davidson Police Department and North Mecklenburg Crime Stoppers to promote involvement in crime prevention activities, police-citizen partnerships, and neighborhood cohesiveness.

Number, Location, and Type of Crimes
During the last two quarter of 2014 (January-June), there have been 101 crimes in Davidson including 7 domestic assaults, 2 assaults, 1 rape, 1 case of child abuse, 1 secret peeping, 1 drug possession, and 4 hit and runs. There have also been: 17 instances of damage to property, 19 cases of larceny, 9 cases of larceny from vehicles, 24 instances of forgery, 2 stolen vehicles, 1 domestic disturbance, 4 cases of breaking and entering, 2 communicating threats, and 1 protective order violation. Four warrants were also served, and 2 missing people were located (see Maps 18-19).
Cleaning Schedule/ Maintenance of Streets/ Graffiti Removal

The Davidson Public Works Department keeps the town looking clean and well maintained by emptying the garbage cans regularly, hanging banners, landscaping and streetscaping, and providing additional support especially prior to and following town events such as Christmas in Davidson. Instances of vandalism or graffiti are generally reported to the Police Department and the Public Works Department has it cleaned up within a couple of days or less.35

Presence of Emergency Evacuation/ Disaster Relief Plans

Davidson participates in CharMeck Alerts Notification System, an emergency alert system for fire and police, severe weather, health and safety, major incidents, and missing persons. CharMeck relays accurate and timely notifications of emergency information throughout Mecklenburg County via text, email, and phone.36 Police, fire, and communications also work together on a variety of emergency drills or workshops throughout the year. Davidson does not currently have an evacuation, emergency, or disaster relief plan for the Town although it is part of the one for McGuire Nuclear Station.37

Davidson College Emergency Activities

Davidson College has its own campus security and works with the Davidson Police Department to protect the students, faculty, staff, and visitors to Davidson College Campus. The college has an emergency response plan that establishes guidelines for campus-wide communication, service coordination and safety procedures in the event of emergencies such as fires, bomb threats, severe weather situations, long-term power outages, hazardous material incidents, or any situation that could threaten lives or safety within the college community. The Student, Staff, and Faculty Emergency Response program is Davidson’s integrated notification system to alert students and staff to emergencies via text messages, emails, voice messages, and spoken instructions. The college also participates in regular evacuation drills.38
Table 20: Existing Language, Progress, and Suggested Additions or Changes for Safe Neighborhoods and Public Spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions and Concerns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good working relationships with Mecklenburg County for environmental regulation, emergency management, parks and recreation, law enforcement, and water/wastewater utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) accreditation recently awarded to Davidson Police Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of north Mecklenburg County magistrate services or courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Immediate need for a second fire station to serve residential growth</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals and Recommendations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 1: Plan for New, Expanded or Relocated Public Facilities and Large-Scale Capital Projects</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short-Term Recommendations:</strong> The proposed fire station in the NC 73 area, a future community center, and a downtown parking deck will require significant capital expenses over the next five years. Town officials should evaluate the costs and benefits of these planned projects based on resident needs. Staff should prepare designs and construction documents for priority facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify a location for and build a second fire station and satellite police office</td>
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</table>

| **Goal 2: Provide Adequate Fire, Police and Emergency Service in All Incorporated Areas** |
| **Short-Term Recommendations:** As the second fire station is built in the NC 73 area, it will require additional staffing and communication infrastructure. The town should create short and long-term plans for public safety, following the best professional standards and goals of the comprehensive plan. |
| • Consider requiring sprinklers in all building types, including single-family residential |
| • Compare street design guidelines to the ability of emergency vehicles to provide adequate fire response |
| • Provide a magistrate in north Mecklenburg County |
| • Meet ISO rating standards for fire protection |
| • Evaluate the feasibility of creating inter-jurisdictional and regional service areas, stations and departments for fire and police |

| **Ongoing Initiatives:** As the mix of land uses in the downtown become more mixed and development extends into the NC 73 area, police and fire staff will have to adjust their coverage, staffing and training plans. Public safety cannot be compromised as a result of increased density and commercial development. |
| • Identify innovative solutions to future public safety needs |
| • Continue community policing strategies to prevent crime |
| • Anticipate greater public safety concerns during the development review process |
| • Identify ways to link service calls, population ratios, and other industry standards to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance |
| • Modify design guidelines of streets to accommodate reasonably-sized emergency vehicles |
| • Improve code enforcement capabilities |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 1: Plan for New, Expanded or Relocated Public Facilities and Large-Scale Capital Projects</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Progress has been made in identifying a location for building a second fire station and satellite police office.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Goal 2: Provide Adequate Fire, Police and Emergency Service in All Incorporated Areas** |
| • Street design guidelines have been compared to the ability of emergency vehicles to provide adequate fire response. |
| • There is no longer an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. |
Street design guidelines have been modified to accommodate reasonably-sized emergency vehicles.

- Code enforcement capabilities have been improved by hiring a code enforcement officer.
- Progress has been made in the consideration of requiring sprinklers in all building types, and evaluating the feasibility of creating inter-jurisdictional and regional service areas, stations and departments for fire and police.
- Progress has been made on the ongoing initiatives of identifying innovative solutions to future public safety needs, continuing community policing strategies to prevent crime, and anticipating greater public safety concerns during the development review process.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

- Consider purchasing smaller emergency vehicles for accessing narrower roads and off-road locations that typical fire trucks and ambulances cannot reach
- Develop emergency response plans to natural and manmade disasters, including drills for staff, volunteers, and related organizations
- Develop policies for winter weather occurrences concerning when Town Hall and other related services will be closed and educate staff on procedure
- Work with code enforcement, police, and public works to determine policies and procedures for addressing property damage, abandoned lots, and rundown buildings.

**Livability Theme: Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Strong support for community policing and home security check programs
- Limited funding sources for public art and landscape enhancements
- Strong interest in strengthening the downtown core as the heart of Davidson
- Lack of public community and neighborhood gathering spaces
- Growing interest in public art
- Increasing inventory of undeveloped town or county owned properties

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 1: Maintain the Downtown as a High-Quality Pedestrian Environment and Civic Center**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Staff and officials should plan for an outstanding pedestrian environment in the downtown, transit, and Exit 30 areas. Town staff should develop strategies to maximize the efficiency of parking in the downtown area, possibly requiring a new parking deck. Additional wayfinding signage and maps should indicate bike and walking routes to local and regional destinations.

- Train all police officers in bicycle patrol and crowd management techniques

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The town and residents should work with civic organizations to ensure their continued success in downtown and other neighborhood centers. The downtown should be well connected to other regional destinations via multi-use paths and transit. Police should monitor public safety in the downtown as night live becomes more active.

- Increase street presence and activity of law enforcement

**Goal 2: Encourage New Public Art Placement and Gateway Signage**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town’s identity should be promoted for the benefit of visitors, new residents and relationships with regional stakeholders. Recommendations from small area and marketing plans should be referenced as the town promotes its quality of life and community character.

- Improve signage for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities

**Goal 3: Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks and Greenways**
**Short-Term Recommendations:** Local police officers and other town staff should focus on public education and enforcement initiatives to establish an environment where motorists, cyclists and pedestrians are expected to exercise caution and courtesy while sharing the roads. Planners should focus their efforts on identifying and prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects for future funding and revising design policies to ensure that all user groups can safely use local streets. Local and county agencies should continue to acquire land for future parks and greenways, and apply for grants to improve existing park facilities.

- Prioritize public traffic calming projects
- Educate the public about the “rules of the road” for all users
- Improve crosswalk and lane marking visibility
- Establish Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines
- Consider traffic access management policies such as limited driveways along major roads
- Consider revisions to guidelines to provide more senior-friendly streetscapes and public spaces
- Limit driveway curb cuts along major roads and bike paths
- Evaluate existing land use context, safety concerns and speed limits on all state and local streets

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Additional residential and commercial development will bring more visitors and residents, and the town should work diligently to build safer streets, parks and greenways. The town should ensure the proper bike and pedestrian facility design is considered during any resurfacing, restriping, or road repair projects. Neighborhood organizations should emphasize public safety by hosting outdoor social events and implementing creative traffic calming along busy streets. Police officers will become partners with neighborhood organizations to be more proactive in crime prevention. The town should also continue to maintain bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- Build sidewalks, especially where gaps exist
- Continue to promote bicycle, pedestrian, and bus travel to local schools with necessary support and amenities, such as bike racks and crossing guards
- Fund traffic calming and street connectivity projects
- Plan and construct intersection improvements to provide safer and less congested regional travel
- Create safe environments where parents and youth can safely exercise independence
- Establish community responsibility for children’s safety

**Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities**

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Well-designed public gathering spaces and park facilities should be constructed, with priority given to the downtown followed by outlying neighborhoods and developments. Park design should respond to resident needs, informed by community surveys and demographic analysis. The management of public properties should also respond to the surrounding land use context and environmental concerns. As a variety of park facilities and recreation programs are established, Davidson will become a popular regional destination for ecologists and educators, outdoor enthusiasts, and sports competitors. The town should consider ways to maximize the economic opportunities of tourism while balancing that with the needs of local residents. Environmental advocates and youth clubs should embrace their role as stewards of natural parks by educating the public about natural resources, providing recreational programs and helping to maintain the facilities.

- Establish an Adopt a Park and/or Adopt a Greenway program
- Establish a regular volunteer maintenance schedule for local trails and neighborhood gathering spaces
- Maintain access and safety of local connections between neighborhoods and local parks

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Maintain the Downtown as a High-Quality Pedestrian Environment and Civic Center**
- There has been an increase in street presence and activity of law enforcement.
- Progress has been made in training all police officers in bicycle patrol and crowd management techniques.

**Goal 2: Encourage New Public Art Placement and Gateway Signage**
• Progress has been made in improving signage for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities.

Goal 3: Provide Safe and Secure Neighborhoods, Streets, Parks and Greenways
- Revisions to guidelines to provide more senior-friendly streetscapes and public spaces have been considered.
- Curb cuts along major roads and bike paths have been limited.
- The land use context, safety concerns, and speed limits on all state and local streets have been evaluated.
- Progress has been made on prioritizing public traffic calming projects, educating the public about the “rules of the road,” improving crosswalk and lane marking visibility, and considering traffic access management policies such as limited driveways along major roads.
- Progress has also been made on the ongoing initiatives of building sidewalks, encouraging active transportation to schools, funding traffic calming and street connectivity projects, creating safe environments, and establishing community responsibility for children’s safety.

Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities
- Progress has been made on maintaining access and safety of local connections between neighborhoods and local parks.

Suggested Additions or Changes
+ Continue to celebrate National Night Out and expand activities associated with this event as well as hosting additional opportunities for residents to interact with police and emergency services
+ Consider installing emergency beacons on greenways and in high pedestrian areas

Livability Theme: Encourage Committed Civic Involvement and Responsibility

Conditions and Concerns
- Improving college-town relationship
- Heavily involved citizenry, especially long-time residents, in local government decision-making
- Highly educated residents
- Increasing availability of volunteers
- Strong support for the Ada Jenkins Center
- Popular regional events
- Commitment to “open government” and good public communication

Goals and Recommendations
Goal 2: Sustain and Promote More Resident Volunteerism and Involvement
Short-Term Recommendations: Town staff should spend considerable time with residents of all ages and interests during public meetings. Local advisory boards should become more engaged and influential on short-term and long-term decisions. The town should consider ways to promote existing volunteer groups while promoting town-sponsored volunteer activities. Communication between neighborhoods, officials and town staff should continue to improve.
- Create a neighborhood phone tree for disaster/ emergency response

Goal 5: Provide Support and Space for Churches, Religious Institutions, Childcare Services, and Community Centers
Short-Term Recommendations: As the population grows, there will likely be more demand for government, religious space, childcare, and recreation centers. The town should consider ways to accommodate public meetings and events in new government facility plans.
- Locate future government offices or police and fire stations in neighborhoods or mixed use settings
### Progress

**Goal 2: Sustain and Promote More Resident Volunteerism and Involvement**
- Davidson has an emergency response notification system.

**Goal 5: Provide Support and Space for Churches, Religious Institutions, Childcare Services, and Community Centers**
- Progress has been made in locating future government offices or police and fire stations in neighborhoods or mixed use settings.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Identify locations for emergency shelters and develop a stockpile of emergency relief and medical supplies
+ Increase public outreach and education about emergency preparation, CPR, and first aid
+ Maintain a database of organizational contacts to notify in case of an emergency or a disaster

### Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food and Energy

#### Conditions and Concerns

- No planning document that specifically addresses pedestrian accessibility and safety
- Misinformation about and hostility toward regarding pedestrian, cyclist, and motorist rights
- Unclear gateways to town and visual cues informing motorists to yield to pedestrians and cyclists
- Conflict between increasing congestion along I-77 and NC 115 and desired pedestrian-friendly downtown
- Interest in making streets and public spaces senior-friendly and accessible

#### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* As the costs of owning and driving motor vehicles increase, residents will become more interested in walking and using bicycles for local trips. However, the majority of residents do not feel safe sharing the roads or know enough about local pedestrian or bicycle networks to make efficient use of them. Town staff and local pedestrian and cycling advocates should continue to educate residents about the benefits of cycling and walking.

- Increase police use of bikes, and add segways to town vehicle inventory

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Develop partnerships between the town, Davidson College, state agencies, health professionals, and residents will promote active lifestyle choices. Pilot programs, such as the Fit Davidson initiative, should be continued as a way to encourage the community to be more active and less dependent on motor vehicles.

- Maintain safety for pedestrians and cyclists in high-traffic areas, such as downtown
- Continue to sponsor bike helmet fit clinics and bicycle safety rodeos
- Plan for optimum bicycle and pedestrian access and safety near the transit station

#### Progress

**Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel**

- Bike helmet fit clinics and bicycle safety rodeos are sponsored by the Town.
- Plans for optimum bicycle and pedestrian access and safety near the transit station have been made.
- Progress has been made in increasing police use of bikes and segways, and maintaining safety for pedestrians and cyclists in high-traffic areas such as downtown.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Train kids on the “rules of the road” by using a traffic garden
+ Increase the ease of reporting for bicyclists and pedestrians who have been involved in an accident
+ Examine current police reporting to make sure it is accurately depicting what takes place in accidents
involving bicyclists or pedestrians
+ Maintain an ongoing list and map of locations and severity of accidents involving pedestrians and bicyclists
+ Increase the number and frequency of bicycle and pedestrian counts for all trip types so that an accurate risk rate can be determined
Environmental Quality

Health Impacts
- Reduced respiratory diseases
- Reduced instances of heart disease
- Reduced risks of cancers
- Improved mental health
- Reduced toxic exposure

Livability Themes
- Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources
- Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy
- Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services
- Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles

Description of Component

Local environmental conditions such as air quality, water quality, noise pollution, and toxic chemical exposure have an impact on community health. Incidences of respiratory diseases such as asthma increase with exposure to air pollutants like tobacco smoke and particulate matter often found along busy highways. These impacts disproportionately affect older adults, children and people with underlying illnesses. Poor water quality can lead to a reduction of water available for drinking, have detrimental impacts to wildlife, and cause an increase in waterborne diseases such as roundworms and malaria. Chronic exposure to noise can result in sleep disturbance, cognitive impairment, hypertension and stress. Toxic chemical exposure can lead to cancer, respiratory failure, organ failure, skin and eye irritation, and digestive disorders. Reducing environmental pollutants and capturing existing pollutants through increased tree canopy and runoff control measures can improve the environmental health of a community.²

Current Conditions (2014)

Number of High Ozone Days

In 2013, there were zero unhealthy for sensitive groups, unhealthy, or very unhealthy days according to the air quality index report for Mecklenburg County. There were 282 days of good air quality and 83 days of moderate air quality. So far in 2014 there have been 224 good days and 80 moderate days reported for air quality. This is an improvement from prior years when more moderate (118 days in 2012, 162 in 2011, and 183 in 2010) and unhealthy for sensitive groups (9 days in 2012, 17 in 2011, and 14 in 2010) or unhealthy days (1 in 2010) have been reported.³⁹

Number and Location of Impaired Streams, Rivers, Lakes

Davidson is part of the Catawba River Watershed which includes parts or all of Avery, McDowell, Burke, Caldwell, Alexander, Catawba, Iredell, Lincoln, Gaston, Mecklenburg, and Union counties. Waters monitored in Davidson include Lake Norman and the Rocky River. Impaired waters include sections of the Rocky River (see Map 28).⁴⁰
Map 28: Impaired Waterways in Davidson
Stream Buffer/ Watershed Protection/ Floodplain

There are many planning ordinances that regulate what can be done within the Stream Buffer Overlay District, the Watershed Protection Overlay District, and the Floodplain Overlay District (Sections 15-17 of the Planning Ordinance). Basically these ordinances are in place to protect the environmental quality of the regional watershed, and prevent property damage, loss of life, and injury due to flooding (see Map 29).

Hazardous Waste/ Brownfields/ Grayfields

There are five locations reporting hazardous waste to the EPA—CVS Pharmacy, Davidson College, Dimetrics Inc., Ingersoll Rand Company, and Recycled Paints Inc. Of these, two—Dimetrics Inc. and Ingersoll Rand—report toxic releases to the land (see Map 30).

Trash and Recycling Program

Those living within the town limits of Davidson have their trash, yard debris, and recycling picked up curbside on a weekly basis by Republic Services on Wednesdays. In October of 2012 the Town switched to large, red, roller recycling bins to encourage increased recycling and easier pick-up. Items that can be recycled include: glass containers, soft drink cans, tin or steel cans, newspapers, magazines, plastic bottles, spiral paper, and broken down cardboard.

Residents in the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) can contract with Ross Sanitation to have their trash collected. There are also large recycling bins located behind Davidson Village Inn off of Jackson and Depot Streets that can be used by the residents of the ETJ for recycling. There is also a Mecklenburg County Recycling Center located on Highway 21, south of Huntersville that will accept: cardboard, paper, construction materials, mattresses, paint cans, electronics, and pesticides.
Map 29: Stream Buffer, Watershed Protection, and Floodplain Overlay Districts in Davidson
Map 30: Hazard Sites in Davidson
Table 20: Existing Language, Progress, and Suggested Additions or Changes for Environmental Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livability Theme: Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conditions and Concerns</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continuing regional air quality concerns</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Commitment to preserving lakeshore habitats and public access to shoreline</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of wetland buffer requirements</td>
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<td>• Inadequate tree preservation ordinance enabling legislation</td>
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<td>• Inaccurate and insufficient environmental inventory submittals prior to development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Vast natural resources and agricultural land in rural area</td>
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<td>• Significant pressure on local farmers to develop property</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Discontinuous preserved open space areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>• No clear plan for open space preservation and management</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Private deed restrictions can cause obstacles to effective environmental management</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goals and Recommendations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Short-Term Recommendations:</em> An open space plan should describe priority natural areas for preservation and enhancement. Policies should be reevaluated to preserve well-connected and quality habitats, significant farmland, and accessible park areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Create a new Open Space Plan</td>
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<td>• Use the Natural Assets Inventory as a decision-making tool for open space preservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reevaluate whether utility corridors count toward open space requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Redefine open space requirements to prioritize preservation of sensitive habitats in development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evaluate public perceptions, definitions and value of various types of open space</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Redefine viewsheds to include a variety of spaces along public streets and greenways</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ongoing Initiatives:</strong> The Town of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, and local conservation organizations should allocate funding toward the purchase of open space property. However, it is anticipated that most open space will be acquired through development and conservation easements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage the Davidson Lands Conservancy (DLC) to secure more conservation easements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Create succession and management plans for protected property</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Protect migration corridors and preserve open space across property lines</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Identify significant natural open space in the downtown and Village Infill Planning Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Preserve most of the undeveloped rural area</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Work with neighboring jurisdictions to preserve contiguous and valuable open space</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Protect viewsheds along greenways and roads in rural area</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Recognize the evolutionary nature of open space</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reward open space stewardship</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Continue to require open space preservation as part of development in the rural area</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Monitor and minimize development impacts on significant ecosystems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Short-Term Recommendations:</em> Town staff and local non-profit organizations should educate residents and property owners on water conservation, pruning techniques and native plant species. As the historic tree canopy in the downtown area ages, the town and residents should replant with native, hardwood species.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
• Work toward designation as a Tree City USA
• Promote healthy pruning techniques
• Set measurable goals to increase and sustain the urban forest
• Consider using only native, drought-tolerant species in town landscaping projects
• Create a “tree bank” for developers and home-owners to mitigate for tree removal and provide funding for new replanting efforts
• Create a tree canopy replanting and management plan
• Allocate significant staff time to urban forestry activities
• Establish a small grant fund to assist low income property owners with removal or pruning of trees
• Revise open space or tree preservation requirements to better preserve existing tree canopy in all planning areas

Ongoing Initiatives: Several public access areas should be made available on Lake Davidson for canoes, swimming, and fishing. The Town of Davidson staff should employ more sustainable management practices of publicly owned open space. The Davidson Lands Conservancy should become a regional leader in sustainable management techniques.

• Require undisturbed upland buffers surrounding delineated wetlands
• Construct more off road greenways for habitat preservation
• Minimize development impact on existing vegetation
• Promote native tree planting and prohibit invasive species
• Bury utility lines along all public streets
• Implement sustainable management practices on publicly owned open space
• Balance the need for roads with tree canopy protection
• Implement the Tree Inventory (2007) recommendations for urban canopy maintenance
• Use Lake Davidson as a teaching opportunity about water quality
• Protect the shorelines of Lake Davidson and Lake Cornelius
• Provide a safe and public access on local lakes for swimming, canoeing and fishing
• Continue to monitor water quality in the lakes

Goal 3: Sustain and Enhance Water and Air Quality

Short-Term Recommendations: Air and water are natural resources that span jurisdictional boundaries, and are therefore regional issues. The town should continue to work with regional agencies to educate the public about the importance of air and water quality. Davidson residents could positively impact the natural environment by adopting their properties with water saving practices and reducing their motor vehicle miles travelled.

• Promote green roofs, green walls, and pervious pavements
• Encourage homeowners associations and residential property owners to employ sustainable landscaping and green household practices
• Create Know-Your-Watershed education programs
• Promote Adopt-a-Stream programs locally
• Work with Mecklenburg County to enforce rigorous water conservation measures
• Provide educational materials regarding sustainable landscape practices
• Encourage residents to install irrigation system rain sensors and other water conservation devices
• Create incentives to reduce hydrocarbon emissions by local businesses or institutions
• Educate residents about current and projected air quality conditions
**Ongoing Initiatives:** The town should plan restoration projects along waterways, considering new policies or models for reducing air pollutants, and design public properties and buildings to be water and energy efficient. Davidson should also continue to help the region obtain state and federal air quality standards.

- Protect groundwater and surface water
- Install demonstration water management projects on public properties
- Increase pervious surfaces in threatened or critical watersheds and sub basins
- Encourage rainwater capture and reuse in all new developments
- Make bulk purchases of rain barrels and other water management devices available at discount rates
- Monitor and mitigate sources of groundwater contamination
- Monitor hazardous waste sites, brownfield and former industrial sites
- Monitor air quality conditions near all K-12 schools and government buildings

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space**

- A new Open Space Plan has been created.
- Open space preservation is required as part of development in the rural area.
- Progress has been made on reevaluating whether utility corridors count towards open space requirement, redefining open space requirements to prioritize preservation of sensitive habitats, evaluating public perceptions, definitions and value of various types of open space, and redefining viewsheds to include spaces along public streets and greenways.
- Progress has been made on the ongoing goals of encouraging Davidson Lands Conservancy to secure more conservation easements, protecting migration corridors and open space across property lines, identifying significant natural open space in the downtown and Village Infill Planning Area, protecting viewsheds along greenways and roads in the rural area and monitoring and minimizing development impacts on significant ecosystems.

**Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy**

- Davidson received recognition as a Tree City USA.
- Progress has been made on promoting healthy pruning techniques, setting measurable goals to increase and sustain the urban forest, considering only native, drought tolerant species in town landscaping, creating a “tree bank” and a tree canopy replanting and management plan, allocating significant staff time to urban forestry, and revising the open space or tree preservation requirements to better preserve existing tree canopy.
- Progress has been made on minimizing development impact on existing vegetation, promoting native tree planting and prohibiting invasive species, implementing sustainable management practices on publicly owned open space, balancing the need for roads with tree canopy protection, implementing the Tree Inventory recommendations, protecting shorelines, and providing safe and public access to local lakes.

**Goal 3: Sustain and Enhance Water and Air Quality**

- Progress has been made in promoting green roofs, green walls, and pervious pavements, working with Mecklenburg County to enforce rigorous water conservation measures, and providing educational materials regarding sustainable landscaping practices.
- Progress has also been made on ongoing initiatives including making bulk purchases of rain barrels, and monitoring hazardous waste sites, brownfields and former industrial sites.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

- Update the Natural Assets Inventory and Tree Canopy Inventory on a regular basis (every 5 to 10 years suggested depending on the rate of development)
- Maintain Tree City USA status
- Work with schools to identify outdoor education opportunities for students and the general public during off seasons or hours
Identify potential environmental partners for protecting air and water quality
Launch a no idling campaign especially around schools and businesses

Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy

Conditions and Concerns

- Building interest in energy efficiency and green development
- Vast majority of town residents drive to work for an average of 25 minutes
- Regional interest in expanding Interstate 77
- Conflicts between increasing demand for new rural roads and desired rural viewshed protection
- Insufficient parking downtown for business and future transit
- Strong local commitment to street connectivity
- Strong support for Davidson Farmers Market and local farming industry
- Grassroots leadership in community gardening

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation

Short-Term Recommendations: Thousands of Davidson residents drive alone to work 25 miles or more each way, not unlike many residents from neighboring towns and counties. Davidson residents should be encouraged to take advantage of existing transit services and coordinate carpooling in order to reduce personal fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, reduce road congestion, and improve air quality. Local leaders and officials should continue working with regional partners to expedite commuter rail service to the north Mecklenburg County area.

- Create a transit rider orientation or mentoring program
- Adopt a local station area plan that includes easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Improve pedestrian facilities at current bus stops
- Work with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line
- Establish land development incentives and policies to encourage higher densities near transit stations

Ongoing Initiatives: Mentoring and vehicle share programs should be established, and educational materials should describe tips for sustainable commuting options. Commuter rail will make it easier for more residents and employees to reduce their dependency on motor vehicles.

- Develop a vehicle share program
- Provide sufficient transit parking downtown
- Provide shuttle routes between the rail station area and other regional destinations
- Work with the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) to maintain affordable public transportation

Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste

Short-Term Recommendations: As residents become more interested in sustainable living, local government and environmental advocacy groups should work with residents and business owners to reduce landfill waste. Increasing participation in recycling and promoting on-site composting are two initial steps to accomplish this goal.

- Promote historic preservation as a means to conserve building materials
- Offer reduced-priced compost bins at the farmers market
- Require recycling bins in all residential, commercial and public buildings
- Promote on-site composting as an alternative to leaf collection

Ongoing Initiatives: As individual property owners and residents become more engaged in waste reduction programs, larger business-owners and new industries should be encouraged to reduce solid waste.

- Continue to work with Mecklenburg County to implement the recommendations in the Solid Waste Management Plan
- Create waste-to-energy loops between local and regional businesses
- Expand capacity for processing food waste through larger-scale composting
- Encourage use of recycled and recyclable products

**Goal 4: Reduce Individual and Corporate Energy Consumption and Promote Renewable Energy Production**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The Town of Davidson Energy Plan identified a number of short term steps that would help reduce the community’s energy demand and encourage the production and use of renewable energy. The town’s ordinances and policies are generally supportive of energy-efficient design, but additional education and incentive programs are needed to approach energy conservation comprehensively.

- Create a resource manual for sustainable energy use, fuel sources and solid waste disposal
- Conduct energy audits of government-owned buildings and equipment
- Encourage energy audits of private businesses
- Adopt a purchasing policy for vehicles, equipment, electronics, and supplies that emphasizes energy conservation
- Educate the public about energy conservation and solid waste reduction measures
- Identify federal, state and local programs that reward energy reduction
- Support low income home energy assistance programs and weatherization programs
- Encourage home energy improvements with financial incentives and public education
- List available tax credits for green development and energy efficiency in town communications

**Ongoing Initiatives:** As the town refines its energy policies and development proposals, equal consideration should be placed on building energy efficiency as the arrangement of buildings and land uses. Local government, regional agencies, and large-scale industries should continue to monitor greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.

- Work with the local building industry to develop energy efficient building construction standards
- Promote Energy Star, LEED or similar certification for new construction
- Support use of on-site energy generation technologies
- Target businesses interested in sustainable energy production
- Require that all future town-owned buildings are energy efficient
- Research policies requiring solar access in development

**Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods**

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Davidson should consider ways to ensure the success of the Davidson Farmer’s Market and other local agricultural distribution networks. The Rural Planning Area should be promoted as a prime location for small to medium-sized working farms.

- Encourage organic farming and animal husbandry in the Rural Planning Area and other undeveloped areas of the ETJ
- Minimize negative ecological impacts of agricultural and food production activities
- Require new development proposals to assess impacts on surrounding active farms and protected open space

**Progress**

**Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation**

- Progress has been made on adopting a local station area plan, working with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line, providing sufficient parking downtown, and working with Charlotte Area Transit System to maintain transit service.

**Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste**

- Reduced-priced compost bins have been offered at the farmers market.
- Progress has been made on promoting historic preservation, requiring recycling bins, promoting on-site composting, continuing to work with Mecklenburg County to implement the Solid Waste Management Plan, creating waste-to-energy loops between local and regional businesses, and encouraging the use of recycled
and recyclable products.

**Goal 4: Reduce Individual and Corporate Energy Consumption and Promote Renewable Energy Production**
- Progress has been made on conducting energy audits of government-owned buildings and equipment and educating the public about energy conservation and solid waste reduction measures.
- Progress has also been made in researching policies to require solar access in development.

**Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods**
- Progress has been made on encouraging organic farming and animal husbandry in the Rural Planning Area and other undeveloped areas of the ETJ.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

- Work with businesses to incorporate strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by commuting such as flexible hours, teleworking, carpooling, hybrid vehicle parking, optional parking spaces, and transit discounts
- Set up a community-wide composting system especially for yard waste
- Increase education and opportunities for composting in restaurants and in homes
- Have energy and resource conservation competitions among the Town’s departments and with major businesses
- Adopt a purchasing policy for using recycled and re-usable products
- Establish an ordinance protecting farmers from nuisance lawsuits
- Provide assistance with organic licensing and encourage sustainable practices in farming and urban agriculture

### Livability Theme: Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services

#### Conditions and Concerns

- Good working relationships with Mecklenburg County for environmental regulation, emergency management, parks and recreation, law enforcement, and water/wastewater utilities
- Misaligned Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) policies locate schools in non-pedestrian and non-bicycle friendly environments

#### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* All departments should strive to be recognized as leaders in their respective fields. As residents seek to achieve more sustainable and healthy lifestyles, town services should respond accordingly. The town should grow its portfolio of services by expanding existing and building new partnerships with affiliated agencies and service providers.
- Create a town staff position to oversee sustainability or livability initiatives

#### Progress

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**
- A staff position to oversee sustainability or livability initiatives has been created and filled.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

- Have a budget dedicated to sustainability and livability initiatives and develop a corresponding work plan
- Conduct an ecological footprint for Davidson and launch a campaign to lower everyone’s footprint
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### Conditions and Concerns

- No annexation agreements between Davidson and Mooresville
- Restriction against extending rural sewer lines has limited rural residential growth
- Low-density residential development potential in the rural area
- Conflict between demands for moderate density infill development and preservation of downtown character

### Goals and Recommendations

#### Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Transit will spur development in the downtown, and residents will need to be reassured that new development is in keeping with the comprehensive plan. The town should continue to monitor parking and vehicle congestion in the downtown area and ensure adequate levels of service.

- Accommodate generous densities for mixed use development near downtown and the transit station
- Provide additional mixed use centers close to existing neighborhoods
- Redevelop vacant or underutilized properties in the downtown
- Make construction of downtown and surrounding road connections or improvements a top priority

#### Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context

**Short-Term Recommendations:** Planning will begin for outlying neighborhood and employment centers, especially near Iredell County and NC 73. The town should continue joint planning efforts with adjacent municipalities to ensure safe and effective transportation, quality employment opportunities, and well-integrated open space.

- Identify metrics and guidelines for noise pollution and mitigation
- Require a green checklist as part of permitting process for new construction
- Establish “good neighbor” policies for development during construction process

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The town should allocate significant staff time to code enforcement and neighborhood communications as new developments mature. Developers should be encouraged to meet regularly with surrounding property owners to discuss nuisance issues and any emerging environmental concerns during construction. The town should continue to support regional transportation and conservation initiatives.

- Avoid redundant and distracting signage
- Minimize outdoor lighting glare possibly through a model dark sky lighting ordinance
- Minimize noise pollution
- Promote the use of green and local materials in new development
- Consider rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve to better regulate the timing and type of development

#### Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape

**Short-Term Recommendations:** The town should update ordinances for the Rural Planning Area to encourage cluster development and rural viewshed preservation. New road connections or improvements should be carefully planned to minimize negative impact on sensitive natural assets, active farmland, and anticipated land use development.

- Create scenic overlay district ordinance along rural roads
- Create design guidelines for the Rural Planning Area
- Consider ways to make farmhouse cluster and conservation subdivisions viable options in the rural area
- Investigate agriburbs (farm-centered neighborhoods) and co-housing as possible options for rural subdivision models

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The town should consider best practices for well-timed annexation and utility extensions in the rural area. The town should also work with state and regional agencies to provide incentives to rural property owners and farmers to continue agricultural activities. Development centers should have distinct edges, but intensities and land uses should transition from the urban core to agricultural and natural settings.
- Develop an annexation plan
- Research and implement appropriate applications of urban growth boundaries and transfer of development rights
- Discourage moderate density and dispersed development in the rural area
- Preserve active farmland
- Continue to control future sewer extensions in the rural area
- Increase road connectivity in developed areas in order to minimize the need for new rural roads

### Progress

**Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas**
- Progress has been made on accommodating generous densities for mixed use development near downtown and the transit station, providing additional mixed use centers close to existing neighborhoods, redeveloping vacant or underutilized properties downtown, and making construction of downtown and surrounding road connections or improvement a top priority.

**Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context**
- Progress has been made in avoiding redundant and distracting signage, minimizing outdoor lighting glare, and considering rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve.

**Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape**
- Progress has been made in considering ways to make farmhouse cluster and conservation subdivisions a viable option in the rural area and investigating agriburbs and co-housing.
- Progress has also been made in developing an annexation plan, discouraging moderate density and dispersed development in the rural area, and continuing to control future sewer extensions in the rural area.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Protect and increase public access to waterways by limiting development and establishing rights of way and lakeside/ riverside parks
+ Encourage the use of pervious paving in parking lots and road construction
+ Incorporate creative storm water management techniques including rain gardens, rain cisterns, rain barrels etc. into public rights of way
+ Consider creative solutions to traffic congestion (roundabouts, increased transit, tolls, etc.) and discourage road widening and additional road construction when unwarranted
Green and Sustainable Development and Practices

Health Impacts

- Lower greenhouse gas emissions
- Better environmental health
- Increased economic opportunities
- Increased access to local foods
- Improved daily physical activity opportunities
- Increased community character and social cohesion

Livability Themes

- Maintain Quality Design and Sound Planning Principles
- Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use
- Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources
- Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services
- Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods
- Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities

Description of Component

Sustainable development practices increase the efficiency with which buildings use resources and reduce impacts on human health and the environment through better siting, design, construction, operation, and maintenance. Examples of green building practices include building re-use and infill redevelopment, implementing passive heating and cooling systems, and using recycled materials and drought-tolerant landscaping. Protecting the urban canopy and rural areas from development can provide shade and reduce energy consumption by cooling buildings and reducing travel time. Green building and maintenance practices can reduce exposure to toxic chemicals and environmental hazards. Sustainable and Green development can have a positive effect on the health of current residents as well as generations to come.²

Current Conditions (2014)

LEED Certified Buildings

Davidson College currently has four LEED certified buildings: a new residence hall and Cunningham Fine Arts renovations (Silver Level) and the College Admissions Office and Duke Dormitory Hall renovations (Baseline Level). Davidson College Athletic Center and a new academic building are also expected to be LEED Certified Silver or better.⁴³

Energy Audits

Energy audits have been conducted in the past on public buildings and different businesses as part of various energy efficiency grants from the US Department of Energy and the state of North Carolina as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Energy use is taken into consideration in every new capital project for Davidson including the proposed construction of a new town hall and fire station.
Relevant Ordinances

Particular ordinances that relate specifically to green and sustainable development practices within the latest approved planning ordinance (which is currently being re-written) are:

- Section 12  Tree Preservation and Landscaping
- Section 15 Stream Buffer Overlay District
- Section 16 Watershed Protection Overlay District
- Section 17 Floodplain Overlay District
- Section 22 Historic District
- Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance

Similar ordinances are expected to be included within the ordinance re-write.33

Village Infill Planning Area

By encouraging development within the existing infrastructure (streets, sewer, lighting, etc.), the Village Infill Planning Area promotes sustainable development (see Map 31). Within the Village Infill, developers can build residential housing and other permitted uses include parks, outdoor recreation, civic, cultural or community facilities, an arboretum or a cemetery. Other uses with additional requirements include bed and breakfast inns, day care centers, religious institutions, schools and universities, and transit shelters.33
Map 31: Davidson’s Village Infill
Table 21: Existing Language, Progress, and Suggested Additions or Changes for Green and Sustainable Development and Practices

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<td>- Conflict between demands for moderate density infill development and preservation of downtown character</td>
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<td>- Possible competition between downtown and Exit 30</td>
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<td>- Inconsistent design standards between franchise and corporate prototypes and context sensitive design</td>
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<td>- Perception that the development approval process is inefficient</td>
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**Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* In keeping with the Targeted Growth Plan described in Chapter 4 of the comprehensive plan, the town should establish the downtown and village area (older surrounding neighborhoods) as the highest priority for infill, redevelopment and mixed use. The town should develop an incentive package to encourage this type of growth over the next ten years.

- Continue to allow for limited single-family infill development and redevelopment in the Village Infill Planning Area
- Consider opportunities for joint use or ownership of underutilized buildings or space
- Remove barriers to development in the Village Center Planning Area
- Prepare construction documents and seek funding for a parking deck in the downtown area

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Transit will spur development in the downtown, and residents will need to be reassured that new development is in keeping with the comprehensive plan. The town should continue to monitor parking and vehicle congestion in the downtown area and ensure adequate levels of service.

- Encourage residential development, especially workforce and rental housing above commercial uses in the Village Center Planning Area
- Design flexible spaces in the downtown area to accommodate various uses
- Accommodate generous densities for mixed use development near downtown and the transit station
- Provide additional mixed use centers close to existing neighborhoods
- Redevelop vacant or underutilized properties in the downtown
- Make construction of downtown and surrounding road connections or improvements a top priority

**Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* Planning will begin for outlying neighborhood and employment centers, especially near Iredell County and NC 73. The town should continue joint planning efforts with adjacent municipalities to ensure safe and effective transportation, quality employment opportunities, and well-integrated open space.

- Identify metrics and guidelines for noise pollution and mitigation
- Require a green checklist as part of permitting process for new construction
- Establish “good neighbor” policies for development during construction process
- Strengthen requirements for the placement and screening of utilities
- Update small area plans and regional transportation plans to show preferred road alignments

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The town should allocate significant staff time to code enforcement and neighborhood communications as new developments mature. Developers should be encouraged to meet regularly with surrounding
property owners to discuss nuisance issues and any emerging environmental concerns during construction. The town should continue to support regional transportation and conservation initiatives.

- Coordinate the downtown and Exit 30 areas with compatible development
- Avoid redundant and distracting signage
- Minimize outdoor lighting glare possibly through a model dark sky lighting ordinance
- Minimize noise pollution
- Promote the use of green and local materials in new development
- Coordinate new development proposals with approved small area plans
- Consider rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve to better regulate the timing and type of development
- Consider ways commercial business can be both pedestrian-oriented and senior-friendly
- Continue discourage franchise architecture

**Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape**

**Short-Term Recommendations:** The town should update ordinances for the Rural Planning Area to encourage cluster development and rural viewshed preservation. New road connections or improvements should be carefully planned to minimize negative impact on sensitive natural assets, active farmland, and anticipated land use development.

- Reevaluate the alignment of planned roads in the rural area
- Create scenic overlay district ordinance along rural roads
- Consider rezoning rural properties to current use
- Create design guidelines for the Rural Planning Area
- Consider ways to make farmhouse cluster and conservation subdivisions viable options in the rural area
- Investigate agriburbs (farm-centered neighborhoods) and co-housing as possible options for rural subdivision models

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The town should consider best practices for well-timed annexation and utility extensions in the rural area. The town should also work with state and regional agencies to provide incentives to rural property owners and farmers to continue agricultural activities. Development centers should have distinct edges, but intensities and land uses should transition from the urban core to agricultural and natural settings.

- Develop an annexation plan
- Research and implement appropriate applications of urban growth boundaries and transfer of development rights
- Discourage moderate density and dispersed development in the rural area
- Preserve active farmland
- Continue to control future sewer extensions in the rural area
- Increase road connectivity in developed areas in order to minimize the need for new rural roads

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Prioritize Infill and Mixed-Use Development Within or Near Already Developed Areas**

- Progress has been made in encouraging infill development and redevelopment in the Village Infill Planning Area, considering opportunities for joint use or ownership of underutilized buildings or space, removing barriers to development in the Village Center Planning Area, and preparing construction documents and seeking funding for a parking deck downtown.
- Progress has also been made on ongoing initiatives including encouraging residential development in the Village Center Planning Area, designing flexible spaces in downtown, accommodating generous densities near downtown and the transit station, providing additional mixed use centers, redeveloping vacant properties downtown, and prioritizing development downtown and surrounding road connections.

**Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Connectivity of New Development with Surrounding Context**

- Franchise architecture is discouraged in Davidson.
- Progress has been made in strengthening requirements for the placement and screening of utilities, and...
updating small area plans and regional transportation plans to show preferred road alignments.

- Progress has also been made on coordinating downtown and Exit 30 areas with compatible development, avoiding redundant and distracting signage, minimizing outdoor lighting glare, coordinating new development proposals with approved small area plans, considering rezoning properties in the Growth Reserve, and considering ways commercial business can be both pedestrian-oriented and senior-friendly.

**Goal 3: Preserve the Rural Landscape**

- Progress has been made on reevaluating the alignment of planned roads in the rural area, considering ways to make farmhouse cluster and conservation subdivisions viable options in the rural area, and investigating agriburbs and co-housing in rural subdivisions.
- Progress has also been made in developing an annexation plan, discouraging moderate density and dispersed development in the rural area, and continuing to control futures sewer extensions.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

- Incentivize brownfield redevelopment of sites near Downtown and commercial areas
- Increase the amount of multifamily and affordable housing options around downtown and commercial areas.
- Re-evaluate height restrictions in Downtown and immediately surrounding Downtown to increase density while maintaining historic character
- Encourage the development of small scale commercial opportunities boarding the rural area- corner stores, grocery stores, cafes, pharmacy, etc.
- Increase active transportation opportunities to connect farmland to parks and Downtown.
- Support converting farmland to public uses such as parks or demonstration farms versus neighborhood construction

**Livability Theme: Provide Sustainable and Healthy Choices for Transportation, Food, and Energy Use**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Building interest in energy efficiency and green development
- Vast majority of town residents drive to work for an average of 25 minutes
- Regional interest in expanding Interstate 77
- Conflicts between increasing demand for new rural roads and desired rural viewshed protection
- Insufficient parking downtown for business and future transit
- Strong local commitment to street connectivity
- Interest in making streets and public spaces senior-friendly and accessible
- Strong support for Davidson Farmers Market and local farming industry
- Grassroots leadership in community gardening

**Goals and Recommendations**

**Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* As the costs of owning and driving motor vehicles increase, residents will become more interested in walking and using bicycles for local trips. However, the majority of residents do not feel safe sharing the roads or know enough about local pedestrian or bicycle networks to make efficient use of them. Town staff and local pedestrian and cycling advocates should continue to educate residents about the benefits of cycling and walking.

- Provide bicycle storage, changing facilities, and increased bicycle parking
- Install more bike racks and walkways downtown, in commercial and civic centers
- Sign bicycle and walking routes on low traffic neighborhood streets
- Improve signage on local greenways to identify distances and nearby destinations
Ongoing Initiatives: Develop partnerships between the town, Davidson College, state agencies, health professionals, and residents will promote active lifestyle choices. Pilot programs, such as the Fit Davidson initiative, should be continued as a way to encourage the community to be more active and less dependent on motor vehicles.

- Continue to promote bicycle, pedestrian, and bus travel to local schools
- Create a shared bike program similar to Davidson College
- Plan for optimum bicycle and pedestrian access and safety near the transit station

Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation

Short-Term Recommendations: Thousands of Davidson residents drive alone to work 25 miles or more each way, not unlike many residents from neighboring towns and counties. Davidson residents should be encouraged to take advantage of existing transit services and coordinate carpooling in order to reduce personal fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, reduce road congestion, and improve air quality. Local leaders and officials should continue working with regional partners to expedite commuter rail service to the north Mecklenburg County area.

- Create a transit rider orientation or mentoring program
- Adopt a local station area plan that includes easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Improve pedestrian facilities at current bus stops
- Work with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line
- Establish land development incentives and policies to encourage higher densities near transit stations

Ongoing Initiatives: Mentoring and vehicle share programs should be established, and educational materials should describe tips for sustainable commuting options. Commuter rail will make it easier for more residents and employees to reduce their dependency on motor vehicles.

- Develop a vehicle share program
- Provide sufficient transit parking downtown
- Provide shuttle routes between the rail station area and other regional destinations
- Work with the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) to maintain affordable public transportation

Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste

Short-Term Recommendations: As residents become more interested in sustainable living, local government and environmental advocacy groups should work with residents and business owners to reduce landfill waste. Increasing participation in recycling and promoting on-site composting are two initial steps to accomplish this goal.

- Promote historic preservation as a means to conserve building materials
- Offer reduced-priced compost bins at the farmers market
- Require recycling bins in all residential, commercial and public buildings
- Promote on-site composting as an alternative to leaf collection

Ongoing Initiatives: As individual property owners and residents become more engaged in waste reduction programs, larger business-owners and new industries should be encouraged to reduce solid waste.

- Continue to work with Mecklenburg County to implement the recommendations in the Solid Waste Management Plan
- Create waste-to-energy loops between local and regional businesses
- Expand capacity for processing food waste through larger-scale composting
- Encourage use of recycled and recyclable products

Goal 4: Reduce Individual and Corporate Energy Consumption and Promote Renewable Energy Production

Short-Term Recommendations: The Town of Davidson Energy Plan identified a number of short term steps that would help reduce the community’s energy demand and encourage the production and use of renewable energy. The town’s ordinances and policies are generally supportive of energy-efficient design, but additional education and incentive programs are needed to approach energy conservation comprehensively.

- Create a resource manual for sustainable energy use, fuel sources and solid waste disposal
• Conduct energy audits of government-owned buildings and equipment
• Encourage energy audits of private businesses
• Adopt a purchasing policy for vehicles, equipment, electronics, and supplies that emphasizes energy conservation
• Educate the public about energy conservation and solid waste reduction measures
• Identify federal, state and local programs that reward energy reduction
• Support low income home energy assistance programs and weatherization programs
• Encourage home energy improvements with financial incentives and public education
• List available tax credits for green development and energy efficiency in town communications

Ongoing Initiatives: As the town refines its energy policies and development proposals, equal consideration should be placed on building energy efficiency as the arrangement of buildings and land uses. Local government, regional agencies, and large-scale industries should continue to monitor greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.
• Work with the local building industry to develop energy efficient building construction standards
• Promote Energy Star, LEED or similar certification for new construction
• Support use of on-site energy generation technologies
• Target businesses interested in sustainable energy production
• Work with Davidson College to jointly fund and develop sustainable energy production sites or programs
• Require that all future town-owned buildings are energy efficient
• Research policies requiring solar access in development

Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods

Short-Term Recommendations: Davidson should focus on providing easy and affordable access to local or regional food sources. Open space within the town limits are opportunities for community gardening and sustainable land management. Land development policies should be evaluated for how well they support agriculture and food production.
• Encourage homeowners associations to create community gardens in common open space
• Encourage urban food production and pocket gardens on public property
• Inventory existing farms in the rural area
• Participate in food planning on state and regional level
• Define and permit appropriate agricultural uses in most planning areas
• Create a local food plan

Ongoing Initiatives: Davidson should consider ways to ensure the success of the Davidson Farmer’s Market and other local agricultural distribution networks. The Rural Planning Area should be promoted as a prime location for small to medium-sized working farms.
• Secure land for community farming in the rural area
• Encourage organic farming and animal husbandry in the Rural Planning Area and other undeveloped areas of the ETJ
• Encourage agricultural use of open space land in residential subdivisions
• Minimize negative ecological impacts of agricultural and food production activities
• Require new development proposals to assess impacts on surrounding active farms and protected open space

Progress

Goal 1: Encourage More Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel
• Progress has been made in: providing bicycle storage, changing facilities and increased bicycle parking; installing more bike racks and walkways downtown, in commercial and civic centers; improving signage on local greenways; promoting active transport to school; and planning for optimum access and safety to proposed transit stations.
• No progress has been made in providing signage for bicycle and walking routes on low traffic neighborhood
streets or creating a bike share program.

**Goal 2: Promote Car Pooling, Vehicle Share Programs, and Public Transit as Viable Modes of Transportation**
- Progress has been made in: adopting a local station area plan; working with regional leaders to expedite the construction of the North Corridor commuter line; providing sufficient parking downtown; and working with CATS to maintain affordable public transportation.
- No progress has been made in: creating a transit rider orientation or mentoring program; improving pedestrian facilities at current bus stops; establishing land development incentives and policies for higher densities; developing a vehicle share program; or providing shuttle routes between the rail station and regional destinations.

**Goal 3: Reduce Household and Corporate Waste**
- Reduced-priced compost bins have been offered at the farmers market.
- Progress has been made in: promoting historic preservation; requiring recycling bins; promoting on-site composting; working with Mecklenburg County to implement the Solid Waste Management Plan; creating waste to energy loops; and encouraging the use of recycled and recyclable products.
- No progress has been made in: expanding capacity for processing food waste through larger scale composting.

**Goal 4: Reduce Individual and Corporate Energy Consumption and Promote Renewable Energy Production**
- Progress has been made in: conducting energy audits of government-owned buildings and equipment; researching policies requiring solar access in development; and educating the public about energy conservation and solid waste reduction measures.
- Little else has been done in this goal and there is a lot of potential for partnerships in this area of energy conservation and renewable energy production with for-profit and nonprofit organizations as well as other government agencies.

**Goal 5: Promote the Production of, Access to, and Consumption of Local Foods**
- Appropriate agricultural uses have been defined and permitted in most planning areas.
- A local food plan or local food system planning is taking place as part of another HIA in 2014.
- Progress has been made in encouraging homeowner associations to create community gardens and encouraging organic farming and animal husbandry in the Rural Planning Area and undeveloped areas of the ETJ.
- No progress has been made on the goals of encouraging urban food production, inventorying existing farms, participating in food planning on the state and regional level, securing land for community farming, encouraging agricultural use in residential subdivisions, minimizing the negative ecological impacts of food production, or requiring new development proposals to assess impacts on surrounding active farms and open space.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**
- Construct multi-purpose bicycle and transit facilities such as bus shelters with solar panels on the top or public art that also serve as bike racks
- Incorporate edible landscaping into public areas
- Consider having parking maximums instead of minimums and either having parking meters or parking decks with fees
- Promote the use of sustainable farming practices on large family farms as well as urban agriculture

**Livability Theme: Enable Faithful Stewardship of Natural and Historic Resources**

**Conditions and Concerns**

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• Interest in preserving the town’s historic fabric
• Concern that future growth is altering Davidson’s historic character
• Inaccurate and insufficient environmental inventory submittals prior to development
• Private deed restrictions can cause obstacles to effective environmental management
• Vast natural resources and agricultural land in rural area
• Significant pressure on local farmers to develop property
• Discontinuous preserved open space areas
• No clear plan for open space preservation and management
• Commitment to preserving lakeshore habitats and public access to shoreline
• Lack of wetland buffer requirements
• Continuing regional air quality concerns
• Inadequate tree preservation ordinance enabling legislation

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space

Short-Term Recommendations: An open space plan should describe priority natural areas for preservation and enhancement. Policies should be reevaluated to preserve well-connected and quality habitats, significant farmland, and accessible park areas.

• Create a new Open Space Plan
• Use the Natural Assets Inventory as a decision-making tool for open space preservation
• Reevaluate whether utility corridors count toward open space requirements
• Redefine open space requirements to prioritize preservation of sensitive habitats in development
• Evaluate public perceptions, definitions and value of various types of open space
• Redefine viewsheds to include a variety of spaces along public streets and greenways

Ongoing Initiatives: The Town of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, and local conservation organizations should allocate funding toward the purchase of open space property. However, it is anticipated that most open space will be acquired through development and conservation easements.

• Encourage the Davidson Lands Conservancy (DLC) to secure more conservation easements
• Create succession and management plans for protected property
• Protect migration corridors and preserve open space across property lines
• Identify significant natural open space in the downtown and Village Infill Planning Area
• Preserve most of the undeveloped rural area
• Work with neighboring jurisdictions to preserve contiguous and valuable open space
• Protect viewsheds along greenways and roads in rural area
• Recognize the evolutionary nature of open space
• Reward open space stewardship
• Continue to require open space preservation as part of development in the rural area
• Monitor and minimize development impacts on significant ecosystems

Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy

Short-Term Recommendations: Town staff and local non-profit organizations should educate residents and property owners on water conservation, pruning techniques and native plant species. As the historic tree canopy in the downtown area ages, the town and residents should replant with native, hardwood species.

• Work toward designation as a Tree City USA
• Promote healthy pruning techniques
• Set measurable goals to increase and sustain the urban forest
• Consider using only native, drought-tolerant species in town landscaping projects
• Create a “tree bank” for developers and home-owners to mitigate for tree removal and provide funding for new replanting efforts
• Create a tree canopy replanting and management plan
• Allocate significant staff time to urban forestry activities
• Establish a small grant fund to assist low income property owners with removal or pruning of trees
• Revise open space or tree preservation requirements to better preserve existing tree canopy in all planning areas

_Ongoing Initiatives:_ Several public access areas should be made available on Lake Davidson for canoes, swimming, and fishing. The Town of Davidson staff should employ more sustainable management practices of publicly owned open space. The Davidson Lands Conservancy should become a regional leader in sustainable management techniques.

• Require undisturbed upland buffers surrounding delineated wetlands
• Construct more off road greenways for habitat preservation
• Minimize development impact on existing vegetation
• Promote native tree planting and prohibit invasive species
• Bury utility lines along all public streets
• Implement sustainable management practices on publicly owned open space
• Balance the need for roads with tree canopy protection
• Implement the Tree Inventory (2007) recommendations for urban canopy maintenance
• Protect the shorelines of Lake Davidson and Lake Cornelius

**Goal 3: Sustain and Enhance Water and Air Quality**

_Short-Term Recommendations:_ Air and water are natural resources that span jurisdictional boundaries, and are therefore regional issues. The town should continue to work with regional agencies to educate the public about the importance of air and water quality. Davidson residents could positively impact the natural environment by adopting their properties with water saving practices and reducing their motor vehicle miles travelled.

• Promote green roofs, green walls, and pervious pavements
• Encourage homeowners associations and residential property owners to employ sustainable landscaping and green household practices
• Work with Mecklenburg County to enforce rigorous water conservation measures
• Provide educational materials regarding sustainable landscape practices
• Encourage residents to install irrigation system rain sensors and other water conservation devices
• Create incentives to reduce hydrocarbon emissions by local businesses or institutions

_Ongoing Initiatives:_ The town should plan restoration projects along waterways, considering new policies or models for reducing air pollutants, and design public properties and buildings to be water and energy efficient. Davidson should also continue to help the region obtain state and federal air quality standards.

• Protect groundwater and surface water
• Install demonstration water management projects on public properties
• Increase pervious surfaces in threatened or critical watersheds and sub basins
• Encourage rainwater capture and reuse in all new developments
• Make bulk purchases of rain barrels and other water management devices available at discount rates
• Monitor and mitigate sources of groundwater contamination
Monitor hazardous waste sites, brownfield and former industrial sites
Monitor air quality conditions near all K-12 schools and government buildings

Goal 4: Protect Historic Downtown Buildings and Neighborhoods

Short-Term Recommendations: Local and regional preservation advocates should educate residents about the financial incentives of historic preservation. The town should also discuss any potential conflicts between historic preservation and downtown infill.

- Create a brochure to educate the public about the tax advantages of historic preservation
- Improve the current development review processes and ordinances to preserve historic buildings and sites
- Consider establishing an additional or expanded local historic district to include residential areas
- Consider establishing Davidson as a Certified Local Government (CLG)
- Pursue legislation to allow the town to prevent demolition in rare cases
- Consider limiting building height to three stories along main street in the downtown business district

Ongoing Initiatives: As the downtown becomes better known as a retail and entertainment destination, visitors and residents will become more interested in local architecture and history. Historic preservation groups should work with the town to organize events celebrating local history.

- Promote the renovation of older buildings
- Create a façade improvement program within the historic district
- Preserve the residential use of historic houses in the historic district

Progress

Goal 1: Protect and Create Meaningful Open Space

- A new Open Space Plan has been created and open space preservation is still required as part of development within the rural area.
- Progress has been made in: reevaluating if utility corridors count towards open space requirements; redefining open space requirements to prioritize sensitive areas; evaluating public perceptions of open space; redefining viewsheds; encouraging DLC to secure more easements; protecting migration corridors; identifying significant open space in downtown and Village Infill planning area; protecting viewsheds along greenways and rural roads; and monitoring and minimizing development impacts on significant ecosystems.
- No progress has been made on: using the Natural Assets Inventory as a decision-making tool; creating succession and management plans for protected property; working with neighboring jurisdictions to preserve contiguous and valuable open space; or rewarding open space stewardship.

Goal 2: Preserve Natural Habitats, the Lakeshore, and the Tree Canopy

- The town has been designated as a Tree City USA recipient.
- Progress has been made in: promoting healthy pruning; setting measurable goals to increase the urban forest; considering using only native, drought tolerant species in town landscaping; creating a tree bank; creating a tree canopy plan; allocating significant staff time to urban forestry; and revising open space or tree preservation requirements.
- Progress has been made in the ongoing initiatives of: minimizing development impacts on existing vegetation; promoting native tree planting and prohibiting invasive species; implementing sustainable management practices, balancing the need for roads with tree protection; implementing the Tree Inventory recommendations; and protecting the shorelines of Lake Davidson and Lake Cornelius.
- No progress has been made in: burying utility lines along all public streets; constructing more off road greenways for habitat preservation; or establishing a small grant fund to assist with removal or pruning of trees.
Goal 3: Sustain and Enhance Water and Air Quality

- Progress has been made in: promoting green roofs, green walls, and pervious pavements; working with Mecklenburg County to enforce water conservation measures; providing educational materials on sustainable landscaping; protecting groundwater and surface water; increasing pervious surfaces; providing rain barrels; and monitoring hazardous waste sites.
- No progress has been made in: encouraging homeowner associations and residential properties to employ sustainable landscaping or green household practices; encouraging residents to install water conservation devices; or creating incentives to reduce emissions by local businesses or institutions.
- No progress has been made in the ongoing goals of: installing demonstration water management projects on public properties; encouraging rainwater capture and reuse in all new developments; monitoring and mitigating sources of groundwater contamination; and monitoring air quality around schools and government buildings. Some of these objectives will require partnering with other government agencies such as LUESA and regional EPA offices.

Goal 4: Protect Historic Downtown Buildings and Neighborhoods

- A façade improvement program has been developed within the historic district.
- Progress has been made in: improving the current development review processes and ordinances to preserve historic buildings and sites; and considering the establishment of an additional or expanded local historic district to include residential areas.
- No progress has been made in: preserving the residential use of historic houses; or considering Davidson as a Certified Local Government.
- Little else has been done in this goal and there is a lot of potential for partnerships in this area of historical preservation with for-profit and nonprofit organizations as well as other government agencies.

Suggested Additions or Changes

- Use green-construction practices in designing and building parks and maintaining fields
- Offer recycling and composting in all parks
- Enforce tree-removal permitting and increase the rates for tree removal (perhaps a sliding scale based on the size, type, and age of the tree)
- Require businesses use best building practices to limit air pollution, noise pollution, and silting during construction
- Maintain a registry of historic buildings including vacancies and current uses

Livability Theme: Continue to Provide Effective and Efficient Public Services

Conditions and Concerns

- Good working relationships with Mecklenburg County for environmental regulation, emergency management, parks and recreation, law enforcement, and water/wastewater utilities
- Relatively high taxes and property values
- Imbalance between commercial and residential tax base
- No clear method for prioritizing local transportation improvements
- Decentralized parks and recreation programs and activities
- Misaligned Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) policies locate schools in non-pedestrian and non-bicycle friendly environments
- Over $107 million worth of capital projects the town would like to see built over the next 30 years

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Plan for New, Expanded or Relocated Public Facilities and Large-Scale Capital Projects

*Ongoing Initiatives:* As the pace of development intensifies, private and public funding will be required to accommodate additional traffic, civic space, recreational programs, and public service demands. The town will need to
leverage local funding with grant sources to help finance new capital projects.

- Compare financing and design requirements for renovating the existing town hall versus new construction
- Locate essential public services in the Davidson-Concord/ NC 73 area concurrent to development

**Goal 3: Prepare for Future Staffing, Administration Needs, and Public Relations**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* The town should focus on training existing staff and developing succession plans. Greater interdepartmental coordination should result in more effective planning and community-based education programs.

- Provide training to all staff on the most innovative practices and technologies in their field

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**

*Short-Term Recommendations:* All departments should strive to be recognized as leaders in their respective fields. As residents seek to achieve more sustainable and healthy lifestyles, town services should respond accordingly. The town should grow its portfolio of services by expanding existing and building new partnerships with affiliated agencies and service providers.

- Create a town staff position to oversee sustainability or livability initiatives
- Create a town staff position to enforce local zoning codes

*Ongoing Initiatives:* Town staff should continue to focus on sustainable services such as tree maintenance, code enforcement, tourism management, and active living programming. New services will require new equipment and personnel.

- Measure the mix of land uses and resulting impacts on local tax revenue

**Goal 5: Establish Good Working Relationships and Firm Priorities with Regional Agencies, Utility Providers, and Adjoining Jurisdictions**

*Ongoing Initiatives:* The north Mecklenburg County and south Iredell County area should continue to work toward good connectivity within the larger region, primarily through well-planned transportation networks and communication systems. The town should support the construction of two-lane roads and multi-modal streets with the understanding that some rural roads may require three to four lanes or controlled access. Utility companies will continue to control significant amounts of property, so Davidson and its neighbors should meet with utilities on a regular basis to ensure compatibility with local plans.

- Work with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Organization (MUMPO) to ensure compatibility of land uses with access management policies and road maintenance and improvement plans
- Encourage utility companies to use sustainable vegetation management practices to allow more variety of built uses within utility rights of ways and easements
- Maintain authorization to control water and sewer extensions

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Plan for New, Expanded or Relocated Public Facilities and Large-Scale Capital Projects**

- Financing and design requirements for renovating the existing town hall versus new construction have been compared.
- No progress has been made in locating essential public services in the Davidson-Concord/ NC 73 area concurrent to development.

**Goal 3: Prepare for Future Staffing, Administration Needs, and Public Relations**

- Progress has been made in providing training to all staff on the most innovative practices and technologies in their field.

**Goal 4: Continue to Provide Excellence in Recreation, Public Works and Planning Services**
• Staff positions have been created to oversee sustainability or livability initiatives and to enforce local zoning codes.
• Progress has been made in measuring the mix of land uses and resulting impacts on local tax revenue.

Goal 5: Establish Good Working Relationships and Firm Priorities with Regional Agencies, Utility Providers, and Adjoining Jurisdictions
• Davidson maintains control of water and sewer extensions.
• Progress has been made in working with NCDOT and MUMPO to ensure compatibility of land uses with access management policies and road maintenance and improvement plans.
• No progress has been made in encouraging utility companies to use sustainable vegetation practices.

Suggested Additions or Changes
+ Develop interdisciplinary teams to address complex issues involving sustainability, health, and economic development
+ Incorporate health and environmental costs into comparisons of tax revenue generation
+ Partner with utilities for additional greenway and trail development in utility corridors and burying current and future utilities

Livability Theme: Support Safe and Vibrant Public Spaces and Neighborhoods

Conditions and Concerns
• Increasing inventory of undeveloped town or county owned properties
• Lack of public community and neighborhood gathering spaces
• Strong interest in strengthening the downtown core as the heart of Davidson
• Limited funding sources for public art and landscaper enhancements

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Maintain the Downtown as a High-Quality Pedestrian Environment and Civic Center
Ongoing Initiatives: The town and residents should work with civic organizations to ensure their continued success in downtown and other neighborhood centers. The downtown should be well connected to other regional destinations via multi-use paths and transit. Police should monitor public safety in the downtown as night live becomes more active.
• Keep post offices within major neighborhood centers and/or downtown
• Build new connections, traffic management systems, improved intersections, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements near the transit station
• Continue to require human-scale, pedestrian-friendly architecture, brick sidewalks, attractive lamp posts and welcoming store fronts
• Build the Carolina Thread Trail and Lake Norman Regional Bicycle Plan improvements

Goal 2: Encourage New Public Art Placement and Gateway Signage
Ongoing Initiatives: New amenities such as public art, play equipment, and landscaping will energize existing transportation corridors, the transit station area, and park properties. The town should look to local and regional artists, historic architecture, and innovative landscape design for inspiration. New developments should embrace public art and clear signage. The rural viewshed, pockets of in-town open space, and greenway corridors should be enhanced with appropriate landscaping, public art and signage.
• Implement sustainable landscape management techniques along greenways and rural roads

Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities
Short-Term Recommendations: Parks should include the most innovative, sustainable and accessible park design features and amenities. Residents and elected officials need to balance active and passive recreational needs by
considering growth pressure, impacts on the natural environment, and the increasingly diverse population. Policies should be developed for residents to become active participants in the design and improvement of publicly-owned properties.

- Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Promote building community and urban gardens on public properties
- Incorporate community gardens in neighborhood/community park requirements
- Establish more shared facility/ball field agreements with private owners and schools

**Ongoing Initiatives:** Well-designed public gathering spaces and park facilities should be constructed, with priority given to the downtown followed by outlying neighborhoods and developments. Park design should respond to resident needs, informed by community surveys and demographic analysis. The management of public properties should also respond to the surrounding land use context and environmental concerns. As a variety of park facilities and recreation programs are established, Davidson will become a popular regional destination for ecologists and educators, outdoor enthusiasts, and sports competitors. The town should consider ways to maximize the economic opportunities of tourism while balancing that with the needs of local residents. Environmental advocates and youth clubs should embrace their role as stewards of natural parks by educating the public about natural resources, providing recreational programs and helping to maintain the facilities.

- Create more nature preserves

**Progress**

**Goal 1: Maintain the Downtown as a High-Quality Pedestrian Environment and Civic Center**
- Human-scale, pedestrian-friendly architecture, brick sidewalks, attractive lamp posts and welcoming store fronts are required.
- Progress has been made in: creating improvements near the transit station, and building the Carolina Thread Trail and Lake Norman Regional Bicycle Plan improvements.
- The location of post offices is not within the jurisdiction of the Town of Davidson.

**Goal 2: Encourage New Public Art Placement and Gateway Signage**
- Progress has been made in implementing sustainable landscaping management techniques along greenways and rural roads.

**Goal 4: Provide Diverse Public Park Amenities**
- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan has been updated.
- Progress has been made in: establishing more shared facility/ball field agreements with private owners and schools; and creating more nature preserves.
- No progress has been made in: promoting building community and urban gardens on public properties or incorporating community gardens in neighborhood/community park requirements.

**Suggested Additions or Changes**

- Better maintain brick sidewalks in the Downtown area or replace them with pavers that look like bricks
- Increase the recognition of the Town as a leader in sustainability similar to being a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community

**Livability Theme: Create Diverse Business and Job Opportunities**

**Conditions and Concerns**

- Limited water and sewer utility availability in south Iredell County
- No single-use commercial or light industrial planning areas
- Insufficient amount of office, retail, lodging, residential and entertainment venues in downtown to attract regional tourism market and diverse population
- Limited number of office sites, especially in downtown, for mid-sized employers

### Goals and Recommendations

#### Goal 2: Encourage Economic Growth that Supports Local Assets and Policies

**Ongoing Initiatives:** The downtown should be promoted as a regional tourism destination. Greenfield mixed use or commercial centers, north of downtown and along NC 73, will continue to build-out. Davidson will be well positioned to support businesses of all sizes and industry types. Economic development should provide a full range of local employment opportunities for residents.

- Aggressively promote the downtown as a destination and employment center
- Continue to support the Main Street program
- Acquire or gain control of land for economic development
- Provide sewer to the areas north of town to enable mixed use development
- Promote local farms and food markets as agri-tourism

#### Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries

**Short-Term Recommendations:** Davidson should work with regional, state and federal agencies to create “green jobs” through new incentives and policies. The town should also prepare for future industries by starting small with pilot projects, new policies, incubators and marketing.

- Adopt economic incentives and land use policies that encourage agricultural use of farmland
- Research incentives for energy-efficient businesses

**Ongoing Initiatives:** As economic opportunities in Davidson increase, the residential population will become diverse and require a variety of employment choices. The town should encourage business owners to be strong community partners and environmental stewards. New employment centers will build on sites along major highways.

- Support local incubators focusing on energy-efficient businesses
- Research ways for businesses to sell by-products as raw materials to other local employers
- Develop the NC 73 corridor as a green, light industrial/office center
- Recruit bio-technology, medical, and social research firms

### Progress

#### Goal 2: Encourage Economic Growth that Supports Local Assets and Policies

- Downtown is aggressively promoted and the Main Street program is supported.
- Progress has been made in: providing sewer to the areas north of town and promoting local farms and food markets.
- No progress has been made in acquiring or gaining control of land for economic development.

#### Goal 3: Attract Emerging and Sustainable Industries

- Progress has been made in supporting local incubators focusing on energy-efficient businesses.
- No progress has been made in: adopting economic incentives and land use policies for active farmland; researching incentives for energy-efficient businesses or ways for businesses to sell by-products as raw materials; developing NC 73 corridor as a green, light industrial/office center; or recruiting bio-technology, medical, and social research firms.

### Suggested Additions or Changes

+ Increase lake-based business opportunities to increase the importance of preserving the water quality of the lakes
+ Recruit businesses that work with material re-use or recycling
Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations to Increase Access to Recreation and Open Space

Recreation Facilities Planning and Evaluation

+ Develop park plans for Abersham and Fisher Farm including park amenities and preservation areas
+ Place parks, greenways, trails, or public spaces along water bodies whenever possible to protect water quality and increase access to the water
+ Track use of parks and greenways through surveys, counts and observations
+ Increase the number of flexible use spaces in parks to keep up with changing trends
+ Consider “high risk areas” identified in the Davidson Walks and Rolls Active Transportation Plan Health Impact Assessment when prioritizing infrastructure improvements and park placement
+ Involve the surrounding neighborhoods in the park planning, revitalization, and maintenance process
+ Balance the need for larger parks for conservation and recreational programming with neighborhood or pocket parks throughout the community
+ Remove unclear or unreasonable goals such as “preserve most of the undeveloped rural area” or “recognize the evolutionary nature of open space”

Town Planning and Evaluation

+ Further examine the connectivity of parks to neighborhoods by bicycle, walking, and bus
+ Ensure the connectivity to parks by sidewalks, bike lanes, and greenways to surrounding neighborhoods and the larger community
+ Recognize roads as the largest network of public space and make them safe for all users (walkers, bikers, drivers)

Open Space/ Viewshed Preservation

+ Update the tree/natural assets inventory
+ Increase conservation easements along waterways/ water bodies and address concerns about public use and liability with property owners
+ Increase diversity of street tree plantings to protect from specie-specific insects or fungi
+ Bury utility lines and protect viewsheds of green spaces whenever possible during redevelopment or initial development

Agriculture/ Community Gardens

+ Help coordinate local community or neighborhood gardening efforts including providing information, land, water, and startup supplies when possible
+ Establish an agricultural district including protection from nuisance suits and providing signage/marketing efforts as a protected agricultural area

Education and Programs

+ Create educational signage to share information about environmental health, water bodies/ quality, habitat conservation, flora and fauna, historic buildings and agricultural properties
+ Designate a staff liaison for tree related questions and education activities
Consider a bike share and tool share program for increasing active transportation and gardening efforts

**Partnerships and Recognition**

- Develop a water quality protection organization or partner with existing organizations such as the Catawba Lands Conservancy
- Work with Davidson Lands Conservancy to develop succession and long term management plans for protected property/ easements
- Develop a recognition program for environmental stewards in Davidson or the Lake Norman Area
- Work with Davidson College to determine an off-season schedule where the public can use college resources
- Partner with neighborhood associations to address potential concerns about private/public use of facilities
- Develop a private/public partnership to provide additional seating areas, artwork, or pockets of activity throughout town

**Recommendations to Increase Access to Healthy Foods**

**Education and Programs**

- Additional education and demonstration projects with composting and gardening for residents

**Agriculture/ Community Gardens**

- Additional efforts to protect and market active farms as part of a historic agricultural district
- Provide coordination and support for the creation of community gardens including the use of vacant property, appropriate parkland, utilities, tools, compost, materials, etc. when applicable
- Work with Davidson Lands Conservancy and other partners to increase conservation easements on active farms
- Develop a community gardening complex complete with garden plots, a community kitchen, education center and offices, produce stands, compost pile, and sheds for storing tools etc.
- Expand the goal of preserving active farmland to include means of doing so such as establishing a historic agriculture district, limiting development in the rural area, and working with farmers to include them in community activities such as the farmers market, food pantry, volunteer support, co-operative efforts, public education, etc.

**Vulnerable Populations**

- Consider the appropriate means to increase access to affordable, local foods for low-income populations including: mobile markets, bonus bucks at the farmer’s market, healthy options at corner stores, stands at transit stops, increased fresh produce at food pantries and soup kitchens, neighborhood gardens or potted starter gardens, nutrition and gardening education, etc.
- Partner with the Davidson Farmers Market to offer value added products from the community gardening complex and economic opportunities for low-income individuals, youth, and those with disabilities

**Planning and Evaluation**

- Include active farms within the definitions of open space and viewsheds that should be protected
- Include community or neighborhood gardens as part of open space in Downtown and Village Infill Planning Area
- Connect community gardens, farms, and parks via bicycling, walking, and transit networks
Monitor and manage the impacts of development on the rural area and existing and potential farmland

Define what is considered an active farm and evaluate the support systems needed by farmers to continue to farm their property

Make protecting and marketing Davidson’s agricultural heritage a goal

Include produce stands next to community gardens as an acceptable use of parkland and public property

Recreation Facilities Planning and Evaluation

 Include prime farmland as part of the Natural Assets Inventory

 Include demonstration gardens (vegetable, stormwater management, and flower) and composting as part of plans for parkland around the Parks and Recreation Department and potentially portions of Aberson and Fisher Farm park plans

 Include a community kitchen including a place to do cooking and canning demonstrations as part of park plans

Recommendations to Increase Access to Medical and Emergency Care Services

Planning and Evaluation

 Establish emergency preparedness plans and activities for natural and manmade disasters- plan evacuation routes, identify places of shelter, establish emergency alert system, develop post-disaster recovery plans and continuity of operations plans

 Support the development of fitness centers and medical offices- especially in areas where there is currently limited access to these facilities

 Offer affordable housing options near transit for service providers (especially those working long shifts) to increase their safety and access to medical centers

 Ask leading medical providers to serve on advisory boards to the Town of Davidson including the planning board, livability board, and the committee on aging

 Develop an inventory of health providers in the Town of Davidson and surrounding communities including small businesses such as chiropractor offices, psychologists, family practices, specialists, homeopathic practitioners, etc.

Vulnerable Populations

 Work with small doctor’s offices to market their services to new residents and request their assistance at Ada Jenkins and other low-income service providers

 Include the recommendations from the Food Systems Plan HIA in regards to providing food for all economic groups including partnering with doctors and the farmer’s market to offer healthy living prescriptions

 Offer transit/shuttles to medical centers for service providers, low-income individuals, and older adults

 Research the possibility of creating Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) or the village concept for meeting the needs of seniors who choose/are able to remain in their own home

Partnerships and Recognition

 Increase partnerships with regional medical facilities and research centers including UNC Charlotte School of Medicine

 Work with the Davidson Committee of Aging and existing nonprofits to vet service providers for the senior population and establish a volunteer program to help seniors meet their needs
+ Partner with state agencies such as the Health Department, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Transportation to track health outcomes, develop affordable housing, promote healthy community design, and create health promoting environments
+ Work with Davidson College to: replicate its farm elsewhere within the Town of Davidson and share produce with low-income residents, share athletic facilities during off-seasons, encourage safe and healthy behavior among their students and faculty, provide health-related internships, etc.
+ Work with the Health Department and local health professionals to provide training and materials to discuss healthy lifestyles and distribute “healthy living” prescriptions to encourage exercise and nutrition as prevention measures instead of medication for treatment
+ Partner with area medical providers to provide volunteer services to assist them as well as gain their assistance at Ada Jenkins, urgent care centers, or during health promotion activities

Capital Investments and Programmatic Changes

+ Take measures to improve response time of fire and police including funding additional locations, partnering with neighboring jurisdictions to increase coverage, providing housing at stations, and encouraging officers to take their vehicles home at the end of shift

Recommendations to Increase Access to Public Transit and Active Transportation

Vehicle Share and Transit

+ Consider partnering with neighborhoods and businesses to offer a zip car or other vehicle share program or shuttle services especially in higher density, senior communities, and low-income neighborhoods
+ Work with Charlotte Area Transit and other partners to improve the conditions around existing bus stops (benches, shelters, clear signage, and safe crossing)
+ Work with Charlotte Area Transit, Mecklenburg County Senior Services, Centralina Council of Governments, private partners, and other service providers and volunteers to offer shuttle or transportation services for seniors
+ Partner with Charlotte Area Transit System to provide additional bus and rail services to connect Davidson with Charlotte and surrounding municipalities as well as shuttle services to additional destinations within Davidson (with Aging-in-Place and health equity in mind)

Bicycling and Walking

+ Coordinate bicycle route signage throughout town including route, mileage, and popular destinations
+ Design sidewalks, crosswalks, and greenways with senior populations in mind as well as children and able-bodied adults- for example allow ample crossing time for those using a cane or walker
+ Use a system of greenways, protected bike lanes, and sidewalks to connect destinations (especially residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, commercial centers, offices, etc.) and provide safe travel for all ages and abilities
+ Regularly prune trees and bushes beside sidewalks, greenways and bike lanes to allow for safe travel of bicyclists, walkers, and drivers of large vehicles such as busses
+ Incorporate walking and biking level of service into considerations for traffic impact analysis, transportation funding priorities, and project selection
Air Quality

+ Establish a local air quality monitoring station/volunteer program and provide education to residents and businesses on how to reduce emissions
+ Reduce the emissions being produced by Davidson’s fleet of vehicles, buildings, and equipment

Water Quality

+ Build parks and greenways around bodies of water to improve the riparian buffer and protect water quality
+ Consider using innovative stormwater management techniques such as rain gardens as buffers between sidewalks or bike lanes and traffic

Partnerships and Volunteers

+ Work with regional partners to develop a connected and consistently designed network of greenways, bicycle facilities and sidewalks
+ Partner with local and regional environmental organizations to create and coordinate a street cleanup, trail building and greenway pickup volunteer program(s)

Recommendations to Increase Access to Quality Affordable Housing

Maintain Existing Affordable Housing Opportunities

+ Work with homeowners within affordable neighborhoods to make sure their properties are well maintained and remain affordable
+ Partner with Davidson Housing Coalition to evaluate the current condition of the housing market and the ability to meet the needs of those requiring affordable housing in Davidson

Senior Housing and Services

+ Work with the Davidson Committee on Aging to explore different housing options for seniors including ways to support aging-in-place, the village movement or naturally occurring retirement communities, condos and townhomes in commercial centers and Downtown, etc.
+ Form an interdepartmental team to determine how to optimize services being provided to low-income and senior residents including housing, transportation, recreation, economic opportunities, safety, etc.

Healthy Housing

+ Work with Mecklenburg County to monitor unhealthy housing conditions including risks for lead poisoning, flooding, fire, inadequate heating or cooling, poor indoor air quality, etc.
+ Partner with large employers to study where their employees live and to locate workforce housing or housing for young professionals near places of employment

Workforce Housing and Commuting

+ Work with major employers to increase affordable housing opportunities within walking or biking distance to places of employment
+ Locate additional employers along transit routes and bike routes/greenways
If medical facilities or other businesses with shift-work and low-paying/ entry-level jobs locate in Davidson, try to provide a mix of affordable housing opportunities close to employment sites

If connections (biking, walking, transit) do not exist between neighborhoods and employment opportunities then work together with businesses and neighborhoods to fill the gaps in connectivity

Work with Mecklenburg County to continue to conduct household travel surveys and monitor commute time and distance and compare to household income- follow this survey up with a study of why people live in their respective neighborhood/ community especially if they are experiencing a long commute

Identify where there is and where there could be additional workforce or rental housing within the Village Center Planning Area

Offer incentives for increasing affordable housing in the Village Infill Planning Area and the Village Center Planning Area and other mixed-use settings to allow for easy access to jobs and services

Work with small business owners and entrepreneurs to hire local and provide affordable housing opportunities when available (such as an apartment over the store if possible)

Consider allowing commercial businesses in the lower story of historic homes near Main Street while maintaining residents on the upper level(s)

**Recommendations to Increase Access to Economic Opportunity**

**Planning and Evaluation**

- Form interdepartmental teams to look at a) environmental sustainability and economic development opportunities, b) increased public art, housing for artists, and economic development and c) increased agricultural, agri-tourism, urban agriculture, and access to healthy food opportunities
- Take health and safety costs into consideration when analyzing impacts on local tax revenue and expenses associated with the mixture of residential and commercial properties
- Work with NCDOT and business owners to consider the lighting ordinance to balance “light pollution” with safety for pedestrians and enhanced natural surveillance of property
- Update small area plans in areas of recent development, property rezoning, exchange in ownership, or expected large-scale development in accordance with any major changes in the planning ordinance
- Identify vacant lots or underutilized buildings and develop plans for them and recruit developers to undertake redevelopment
- Develop guidelines and plans for construction in neighborhood centers to encourage development of economic centers close to residential areas- include affordable housing options within these centers such as studios or condos above commercial areas
- Conduct a survey/ study of where people live and work and determine the work/housing balance for Davidson in comparison to surrounding communities

**Living Wage**

- Work with major employers and Davidson College to ensure all employees are receiving a living wage and access to basic benefits
- Consider passing a living wage ordinance that would require businesses that enter into contract with the Town of Davidson to provide their full-time employees with wages that would allow them to live within Davidson according to Davidson’s cost of living or consumer price index. Work with representatives within the Charlotte region to pass similar ordinances.
**Sustainability and Energy Efficiency**

+ Partner with local businesses and large employers in Charlotte, and regional partners in transit and air quality to consider, create, and promote ride share programs, energy efficiency, and waste reduction programs as part of a regional sustainability initiative
+ Work with Mecklenburg County to provide education about local, state, and federal incentives or benefits to developers interested in developing in a more sustainable and energy efficient method
+ Develop a jobs program employing high school and college students and young professionals interested in creating advancements in sustainable measures, green technology, or energy efficiency
+ Conduct an inventory of energy use, recycling programs, ride share opportunities, green-cleaning programs and building characteristics (in regards to environmental implications, worker safety, and health promotion) for major employers within Davidson
+ Partner with Mecklenburg County to provide education on sources of green and local materials for development and how building materials can be re-used or properly disposed of

**MI-Connection**

+ Determine how many households and businesses within Davidson use MI-Connection, how many residents are employed by MI-Connection, and whether or not MI-Connection played a role in attracting new businesses to locate in Davidson
+ Ensure that MI-Connection offers its full-time employees a living wage

**Recommendations for Promoting Completeness of Neighborhoods**

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Amenities and Parks**

+ Create bike boulevards and marked bicycle and pedestrian routes through neighborhood streets including mileage to popular destinations
+ Make a concerted effort to include youth and older adults within park planning, especially in planning the facilities, anticipated programs, and connections to (sidewalks, bike paths, etc.) neighborhood parks
+ Partner with landowners to construct and maintain additional sidewalks particularly where gaps exist and in older neighborhoods
+ Work with neighbors to develop neighborhood parks that have their own unique character and meet the needs of residents of that particular neighborhood
+ Monitor and make additional pedestrian and bicycling improvements as development around the Circles at 30 continues
+ Continue to increase public outreach on the trash and recycling schedules and requests to not block sidewalks or bike lanes

**Schools**

+ Work with schools to manage traffic during peak hours and re-establish the walking school buses and biking to school
+ Encourage the continued use of neighborhood school buildings as schools or centers of civic activity similar to the use of Ada Jenkins
+ Consider developing healthy school zones prohibiting fast food outlets, liquor or smoking stores, or unhealthy convenient stores from locating within a quarter mile of schools
+ Provide a staff liaison to schools trying to develop a healthy school program or incorporate health initiatives into their policies and programs
+ Publicize and help coordinate community-wide school drives to help provide needed supplies and volunteers for school activities

**Partnerships**

+ Develop neighborhood watch or neighborhood associations to promote safety, neighborhood cohesion, and maintenance of property and shared spaces within the neighborhood
+ Increase opportunities for private investments in public events or features such as public art/ adopting a greenway etc.
+ Encourage the establishment of a nonprofit leaders’ network
+ Partner with developers to include public buildings- churches, meeting centers, schools- within large neighborhood developments
+ Work with private entities to offer car share programs such as Zip Car
+ Work with neighborhoods to implement storm-water management measures such as keeping drains clear and installing rain gardens

**Seniors**

+ Support the “village” approach to providing senior services
+ Work with partners to offer additional senior recreational programs including social, educational, and physical activity opportunities
+ Increase multi-generational opportunities in housing, recreational programs, educational activities, mentorship programs etc.

**Young Professionals and Singles**

+ Market to firms that appeal to young professionals such as high tech industries, social media, microbreweries, etc.
+ Provide affordable housing opportunities near commercial and transit centers to make car-free living a viable option- especially for those in the service industry
+ Increase social activities for single professionals or retirees in Davidson

**Racial and Ethnic Minorities**

+ Include ethnic as well as racial diversity and expand efforts beyond supporting Davidson’s historic African American neighborhood to include promoting a diversity of cultures through events, centers of activity, restaurants, and markets

**Planning**

+ Combine land use and transportation planning efforts to create livable and human-oriented areas where transportation routes meet the needs of existing and future land uses
+ Address the potential for gentrification in neighborhoods as a result of future developments or transit investments
Encourage developers to develop and facilitate the development of mix-use neighborhoods or neighborhood centers with cafés, corner markets, office space, and public buildings (similar to St. Albans)

**Rural Areas and Urban Agriculture**

- Establish a voluntary or historical agricultural district in the rural area and increase agricultural tourism efforts to increase awareness of Davidson’s agricultural heritage
- Provide neighborhood commercial activities- grocery store, pharmacy, small restaurants, etc.- on the border of rural areas
- Increase the bicycle and pedestrian networks to connect the rural areas to regional parks and priority destinations
- Identify vacant lots for temporary or permanent agricultural purposes
- Encourage tool and seed share stations in residential neighborhoods

**Recommendations for Promoting Safe Neighborhoods and Public Spaces**

**Capital Investments**

- Consider purchasing smaller emergency vehicles for accessing narrower roads and off-road locations that typical fire trucks and ambulances cannot reach
- Consider installing emergency beacons on greenways and in high pedestrian areas

**Plans and Policies**

- Develop emergency response plans to natural and manmade disasters, including drills for staff, volunteers, and related organizations
- Develop policies for winter weather occurrences concerning when Town Hall and other related services will be closed and educate staff on procedure
- Work with code enforcement, police, and public works to determine policies and procedures for addressing property damage, abandoned lots, and rundown buildings
- Identify locations for emergency shelters and develop a stockpile of emergency relief and medical supplies
- Maintain a database of organizational contacts to notify in case of an emergency, or a natural or manmade disaster

**Pedestrians and Bicyclists**

- Train kids on the “rules of the road” by using a traffic garden
- Increase the ease of reporting for bicyclists and pedestrians who have been involved in an accident
- Examine current police reporting to make sure it is accurately depicting what takes place in accidents involving bicyclists or pedestrians
- Maintain an ongoing list and map of locations and severity of accidents involving pedestrians and bicyclists
- Increase the number and frequency of bicycle and pedestrian counts for all trip types so that an accurate risk rate can be determined

**Programs and Activities**

- Continue to celebrate National Night Out and expand activities associated with this event as well as hosting additional opportunities for residents to interact with police and emergency services
+ Increase public outreach and education about emergency preparation, CPR, and first aid

**Recommendations for Promoting Environmental Quality**

*Plans, Recognitions, and Studies*

+ Update the Natural Assets Inventory and Tree Canopy Inventory on a regular basis (every 5 to 10 years suggested depending on the rate of development)
+ Maintain Tree City USA status
+ Establish an ordinance protecting farmers from nuisance lawsuits
+ Have energy and resource conservation competitions among the Town’s departments and with major businesses
+ Identify potential environmental partners for protecting air and water quality
+ Conduct an ecological footprint for Davidson and launch a campaign to lower everyone’s footprint

*Outreach and Education*

+ Work with schools to identify outdoor education opportunities for students and the general public during off-seasons or hours
+ Launch a no idling campaign especially around schools and businesses
+ Work with businesses to incorporate strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by commuting such as flexible hours, teleworking, carpooling, hybrid vehicle parking, optional parking spaces, and transit discounts
+ Increase education and opportunities for composting in restaurants and in homes
+ Provide assistance with organic licensing and encourage sustainable practices in farming and urban agriculture

*Policies and Programs*

+ Set up a community-wide composting system especially for yard waste
+ Adopt a purchasing policy for using recycled and re-usable products
+ Have a budget dedicated to sustainability and livability initiatives and develop a corresponding work plan
+ Protect and increase public access to waterways by limiting development and establishing public rights of way and lakeside/ riverside parks
+ Encourage the use of pervious paving in parking lots and road construction
+ Incorporate creative storm water management techniques including rain gardens, rain cisterns, rain barrels etc. into public rights of way
+ Consider creative solutions to traffic congestion (roundabouts, increased transit, tolls, etc.) and discourage road widening and additional road construction when unwarranted

**Recommendations for Promoting Green and Sustainable Development and Practices**

*Downtown*

+ Better maintain brick sidewalks in the downtown area or replace them with pavers that look like bricks
+ Incentivize brownfield redevelopment of sites near downtown and commercial areas
+ Increase the amount of multifamily and affordable housing options around downtown and commercial areas.
+ Re-evaluate height restrictions in downtown and immediately surrounding downtown to increase density while maintaining historic character

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**Rural Area**

- Encourage the development of small scale commercial opportunities boarding the rural area - corner stores, grocery stores, cafes, pharmacy, etc.
- Increase active transportation opportunities to connect farmland to parks and downtown
- Support converting farmland to public uses such as parks or demonstration farms versus neighborhood construction
- Promote the use of sustainable farming practices on large family farms as well as urban agriculture

**Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit**

- Construct multi-purpose bicycle and transit facilities such as bus shelters with solar panels on the top or public art that also serve as bike racks
- Partner with utilities for additional greenway and trail development in utility corridors and burying current and future utilities

**Planning, Policies, and Programs**

- Incorporate edible landscaping into public areas
- Consider having parking maximums instead of minimums and either having parking meters or parking decks with fees
- Develop interdisciplinary teams to address complex issues involving sustainability, health, and economic development
- Incorporate health and environmental costs into comparisons of tax revenue generation
- Use green-construction practices in designing and building parks and maintaining fields
- Offer recycling and composting in all parks
- Enforce tree-removal permitting and increase the rates for tree removal (perhaps a sliding scale based on the size, type, and age of the tree)
- Increase the recognition of the Town as a leader in sustainability similar to being a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community
- Maintain a registry of historic buildings including vacancies and current uses
- Require businesses use best building practices to limit air pollution, noise pollution, and silting during construction

**Economic Opportunities**

- Increase lake-based business opportunities to increase the importance of preserving the water quality of the lakes
- Recruit businesses that work with material re-use or recycling
Conclusion

Although this report is available for public review and comment, the intention of the report is to provide guidance and a different perspective to planning staff. It is very rare for a community to take the time to analyze what has been accomplished within the previous version of the comprehensive plan and to build off those accomplishments for future iterations of the plan. Hopefully with the observations and suggestions within this HIA and additional input from Davidson’s staff, residents, advisory committees, regional partners, and the Board of Commissioners, an even better Comprehensive Plan can be developed in 2015.
References


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