

CITY OF EDEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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CITY *of* EDEN



REMEMBER THE 3 R's
WEAR A MASK
WASH YOUR HANDS
WATCH YOUR DISTANCE
MASK
REQUIRED

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WASH YOUR HANDS
WATCH YOUR DISTANCE
MASK
REQUIRED



1 INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Plan serves as the guiding document for the growth and development of the City of Eden.

The Comprehensive Plan is the result of a year-long process to capture the vision of the City's residents and community members for the future of Eden. It distills this vision into a Future Land Use Map and actionable policy recommendations to be used by City staff, elected officials, and decision makers for the next 20 years and beyond. Implementation of the plan will be incremental as policy, funding, and programming decisions are made, but its impacts on the quality of life in Eden will be broad.

Overview

An up-to-date Comprehensive Plan is a North Carolina General Statute requirement, but even more, it is an essential tool for guiding a City's growth and development in a way that reflects the community it serves.

In the Spring of 2021, the City of Eden began the process to update their Comprehensive Plan. The result is a document that reflects the vision of the community, guides the City for the next 20 years, and addresses several areas that directly affect residents' quality of life.

Process

The 14-month-long process consisted of substantial community engagement paired with in-depth analysis of the existing conditions in the City. To familiarize themselves with the past and present conditions of the City, the project team conducted demographic research, spatial analysis, and reviewed existing planning documents. To create a vision for Eden's future, the team sought input from stakeholders, members of the public, and City staff and leadership.

Extensive community engagement formed the foundation of this plan. Outreach included three public meetings, a community survey, and conversation with dozens of Eden residents and community members. A full description of public engagement is available in Chapter Two of this Plan. Components of public engagement included:

- » Stakeholder Focus Groups
- » 378 Community Survey Responses
- » Three Public Meetings
- » Five Steering Committee Meetings



Project Schedule



Why Plan?

An updated Comprehensive Plan is a State-required document for municipalities in North Carolina, and is also a strategic tool for local governments to shape their future.

It presents an opportunity every 5-10 years for a community to have a conversation about

- » Where they are
- » Where they're going
- » Where they want to be
- » And how they will get there.

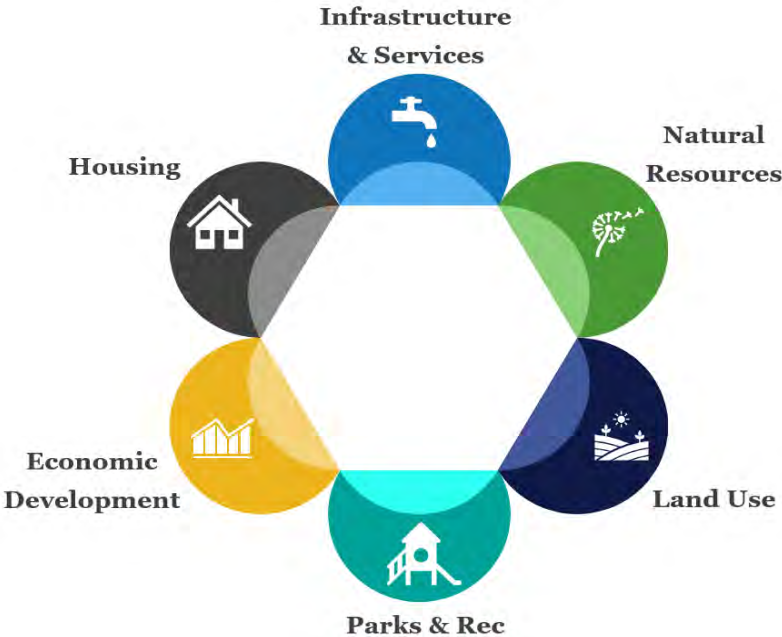
This project came at an opportune time for the City. Leading up to the project kickoff in Spring 2021, Eden had experienced a lot of change. This includes a new major employer, Purina, set to occupy the former Miller factory, an uptick in residential demands, a recent spike of interest in real estate within the City, and the recent momentum in development in Uptown. This plan incorporates those factors and many others in the creation of the goals and recommendations, ensuring it serves present and future residents alike.

The Comprehensive Plan will serve as guidance for all other planning and decision-making in Eden, such as:

- ▶ Zoning and code updates
- ▶ Small Area Plans
- ▶ Parks and Recreation Planning
- ▶ NCDOT Planning
- ▶ Economic Development Planning
- ▶ Rezoning decisions
- ▶ City funding and programming

Incremental decision making and further planning are some means by which the Comprehensive Plan will be implemented.

A Comprehensive Plan addresses...



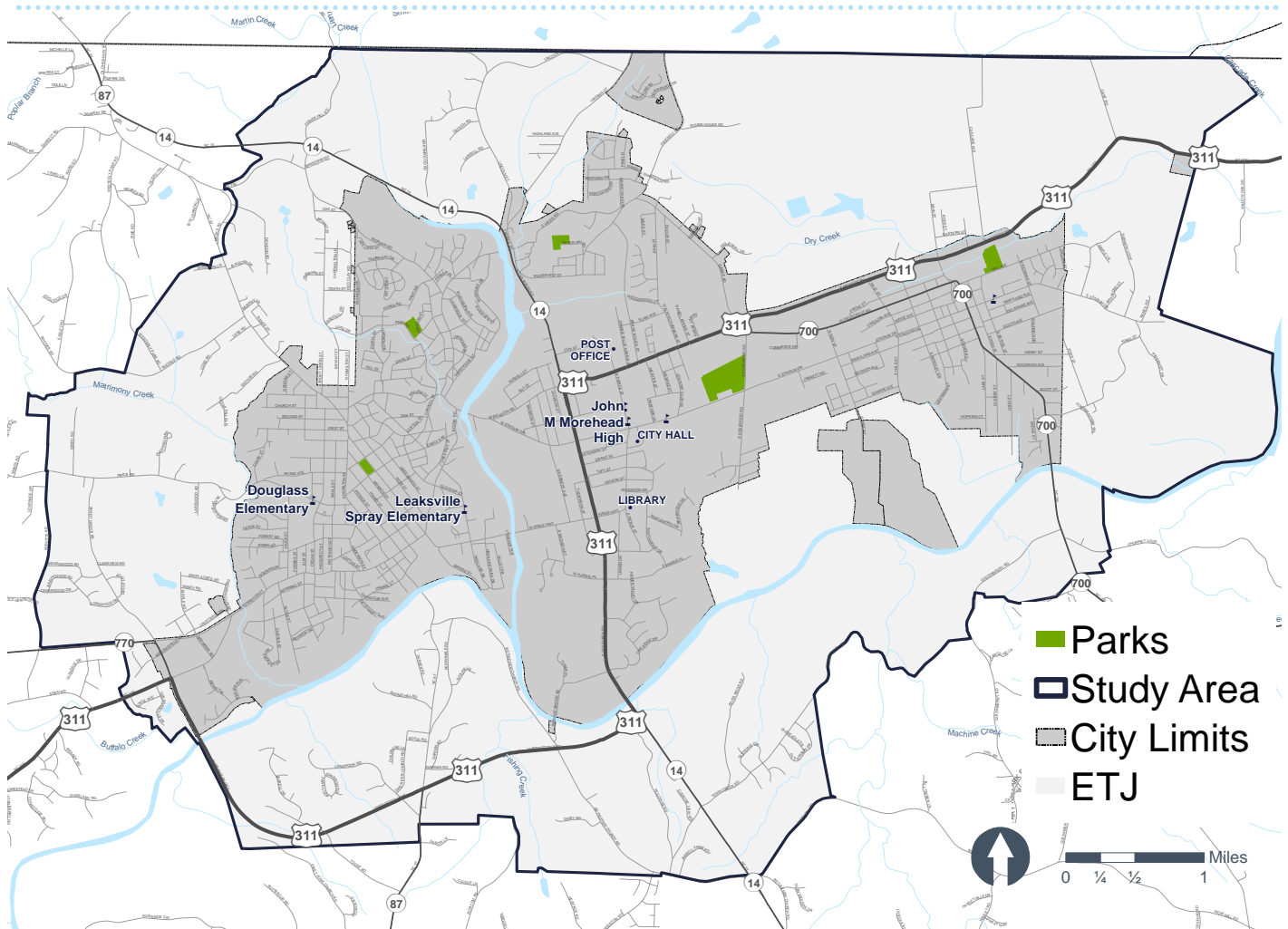
Study Area

The project study area encompasses all the land in Eden's corporate limits and extraterritorial jurisdiction, about 24,945 acres.

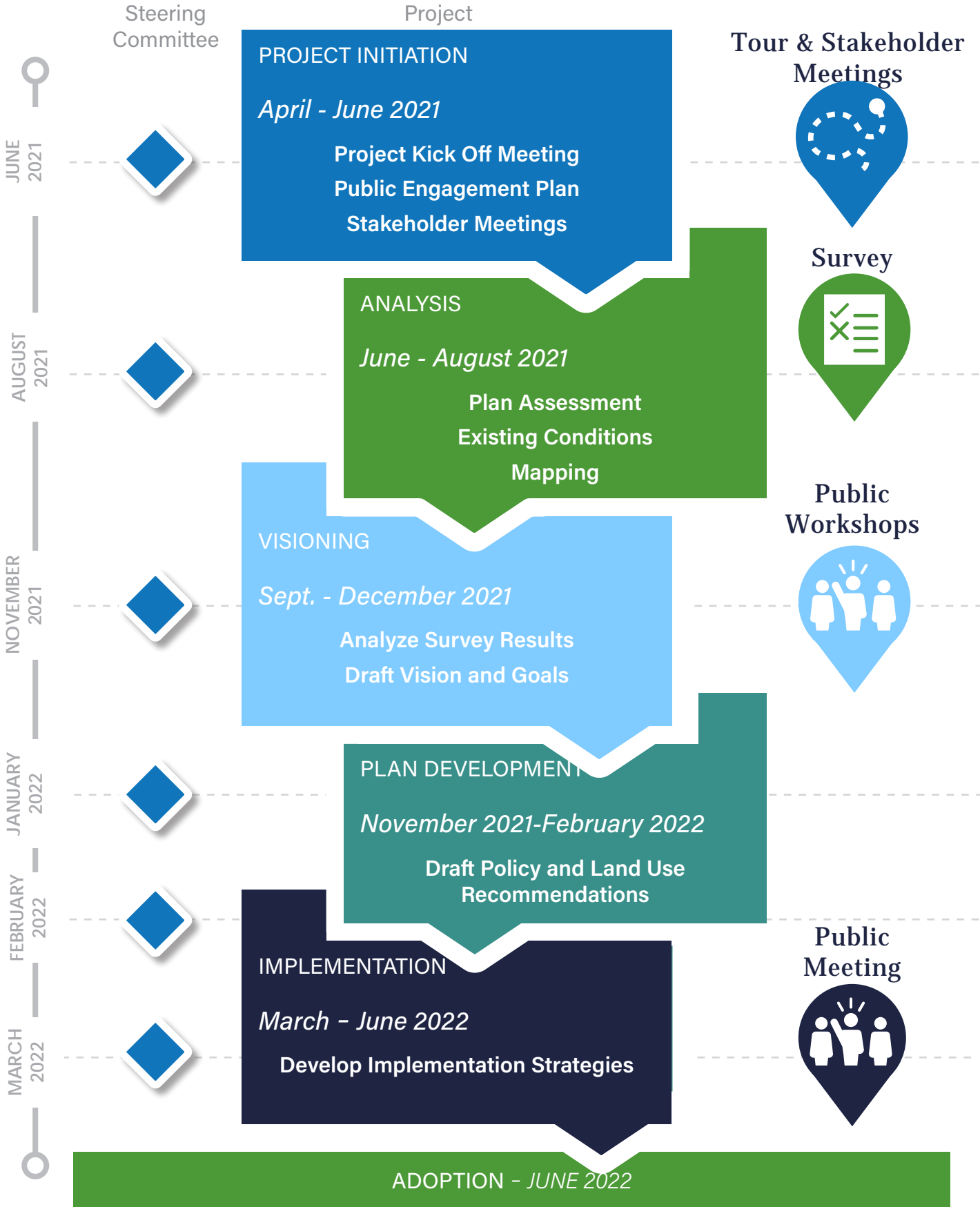
Within those nearly 25,000 acres are two rivers, the Smith and the Dan. The rivers have historically been a source of prosperity for the City, powering large mills and providing water that helped the three original towns grow. Now, the rivers and surrounding natural resources have great potential for positively influencing Eden's future.

Eden's unique condition of having three downtowns, plus the Cook Block, within the study area is a major theme throughout the plan. These downtowns represent Eden's history, and the community expressed throughout the project the desire to see them all preserved and thriving again.

STUDY AREA MAP



Project Process





2 PROCESS & VISION

A plan of this scope and influence is the result of a community conversation. Creating a Comprehensive Plan that accurately captures the community’s vision and contains actionable, realistic, forward-thinking goals requires a significant amount of public engagement combined with a multidisciplinary research effort.

The year-long timeline of the Eden Comprehensive Plan project allowed the project team to get to know the community in-depth before writing the recommendations, resulting in a plan that uniquely reflects and shapes the City of Eden.

ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

378 Survey Responses

3 Public Meetings

1 Community Tour

5 Steering Committee Meetings

6 Stakeholder Meetings

2 Uptown Merchants’ Association Meetings

Public Engagement

Who was involved?

A plan of this magnitude would not be possible without extensive input from across the community. Input from a wide variety of community members and stakeholders was essential to crafting a plan that accurately reflected residents' visions, concerns, and hopes for Eden's future. The public engagement process included a diverse set of engagement opportunities in an effort to engage different people through the many formats. These included:

Steering Committee

The City's Planning Board acted as the steering committee for the project. They met with the project team five times over the course of the project to provide input and give direction for the project.

Stakeholder Interviews

A series of hour-long interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups in Phase One of the project. Each stakeholder meeting addressed a different group, with topics including infrastructure, parks and recreation, growth, and economic development.

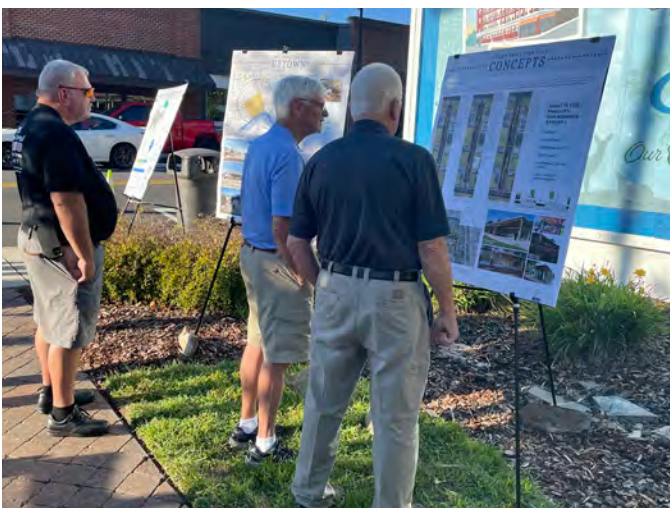
Survey

The community survey ran from August 25 to November 4, 2021 and received 378 total responses. Nearly 90% of respondents lived in Eden, and represented a wide range of age and income brackets. Respondents answered questions about their priorities, concerns, and vision for the City for the next twenty years across a variety of topics. It featured multiple choice, ranking, and open-ended questions.

Public Meetings

Two public meetings were held during the visioning portion of the planning process in September 2021. One was held in Harrington Park in Uptown and the other at Grogan Park near City Hall. Both meetings featured information about the project, results from the analysis thus far, and then solicited their feedback via several activities such as mapping and visioning boards.

Later in the project, the team presented the draft Plan at a public meeting on March 24, 2022 at City Hall. The meeting presented the draft Future Land Use Map and recommendations to the public and invited comment and discussion about the material.



▶ September public meeting at Harrington Park



▶ Draft Plan public meeting at City Hall

Stakeholder Interview Summary

Stakeholder interviews were structured as six sessions over the course of one day in June 2021. These sessions were free-form conversations that allowed those who know the City best to discuss with the project team current conditions, future projects, and community priorities.

Top comments from the stakeholder sessions have been organized into plan topics below. Many comments address multiple topics.



▶ Stakeholder Interviews

Themes	What we heard
Housing	<p>Eden needs more housing of all types, including higher-end single family homes and multifamily homes like apartments and townhouses.</p> <p>Real estate market in 2021 was the busiest realtors had experienced for a long time.</p>
Economic Development	<p>Industrial recruiting is a key goal, but the City lacks available sites.</p> <p>Eden needs to stay competitive with surrounding areas in terms of economic recruitment.</p> <p>Need to better prepare area students for workforce through partnerships and education.</p>
City Services, Infrastructure, Utilities	<p>City needs to increase revenue streams.</p> <p>Hiring full time employees (police) and finding volunteers (fire) is difficult.</p> <p>Improved ISO fire rating is goal for fire department.</p> <p>Technology and opioid crisis are concerns for police department.</p> <p>Road resurfacing is difficult to keep up with due to funding cuts.</p>
Downtowns	<p>Lots of demand for residential units in Uptown.</p> <p>Need to reinforce the identities and address the needs of downtowns beside Uptown.</p> <p>Code enforcement is needed in Draper and Boulevard. The current condition of properties is not helping to attract businesses.</p> <p>Uptown has a perceived parking problem, but signage and lighting may help.</p>
Park, Recreation, and Culture	<p>Improvements are needed in neighborhood parks.</p> <p>Residents want places to spend time near rivers. Need to increase physical accessibility to riversides, not just fishing or boating access.</p> <p>Need to promote outdoor recreation within the community, particularly the black community, not just for tourism.</p> <p>Eden has a rich cultural history that can be leveraged more.</p>
City Staff	<p>Road resurfacing is difficult to keep up with due to funding cuts.</p> <p>Water plant is not running at optimal capacity. Needs more customers.</p> <p>Stormwater improvements are reactionary, not precautionary.</p> <p>City needs to upgrade its technology to keep up with personnel and security needs.</p>

Public Workshops

Two public visioning workshops were held in September 2021. The outdoor events informed attendees about the Plan and offered multiple activities for them to participate in. By offering different formats for feedback, participants were forced to think in different ways about their concerns, visions, and goals for Eden's future. The following is a summary of feedback across all activities.

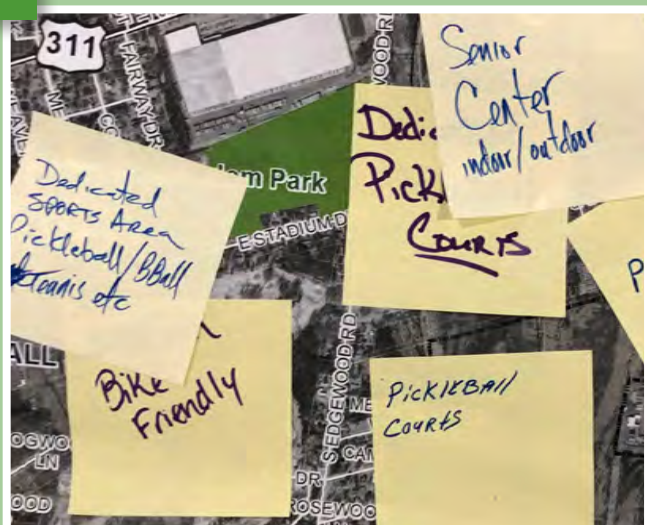
Top Themes

- » Outdoor recreation
- » Aesthetics and code enforcement in downtowns
- » More events and programming
- » Improvements to outdoor public spaces
- » More bus stops at key locations
- » Better pedestrian connectivity

Outdoor Recreation



- » Pocket park near The Boulevard
- » Hiking trails cut to Douglass Elementary
- » Fitness areas in the parks
- » Pickleball Courts (lots of mentions)
- » Expand greenways
- » See the river from the greenway



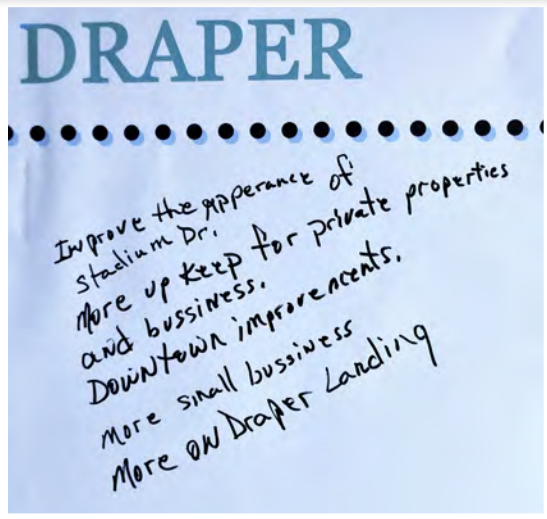
Events and Facilities



- » More events like Riverfest
- » Bathrooms Downtown
- » Shelter on Monroe Street
- » New senior center
- » Fitness classes
- » Pickleball Courts
- » Expand greenways
- » Use DeHart Park for events



Downtowns



Draper

- More up keep for properties
- More small businesses
- Encourage grocery store here
- Use grassy area behind Draper Elementary
- Upkeep businesses

» The Boulevard

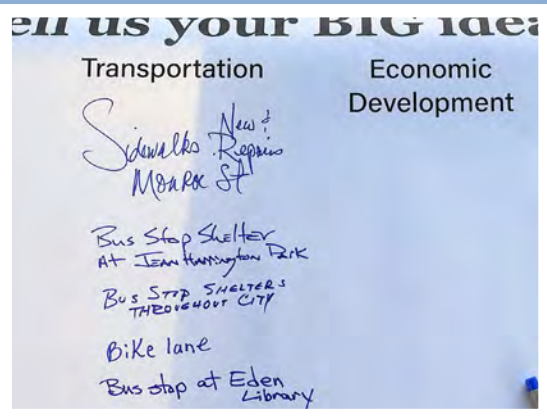
- Address absentee owners
- Enforcement of laws

» Uptown

- More music
- More events
- Small grocery store

» Spray (No specific responses)

Mobility



- » Sidewalks on Monroe Street
- » Bus shelters throughout City
- » Bus stop shelter at Harrington Park, library, senior center
- » Make Downtowns pedestrian friendly

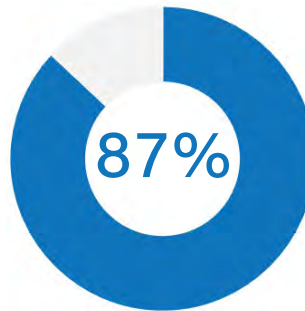


Survey Results

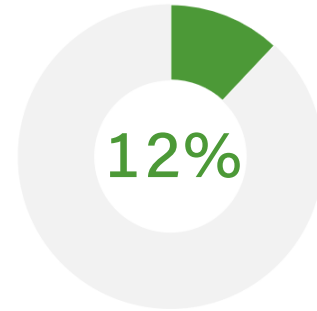
The community survey ran from August 25 to November 4, 2021 and received 378 total responses. Nearly 90% of respondents lived in Eden, with 60% either being from here or living here to be near family, and represented a wide range of age and income brackets.

Participants

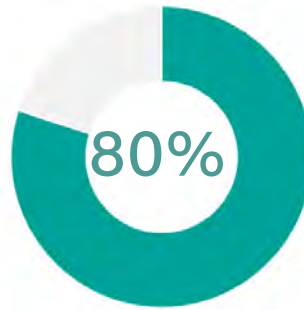
Who Responded?



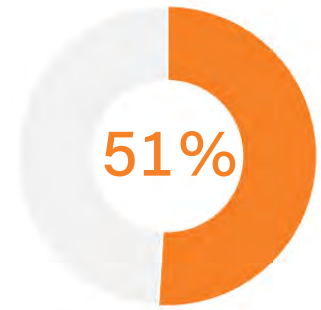
Live here



Own Businesses

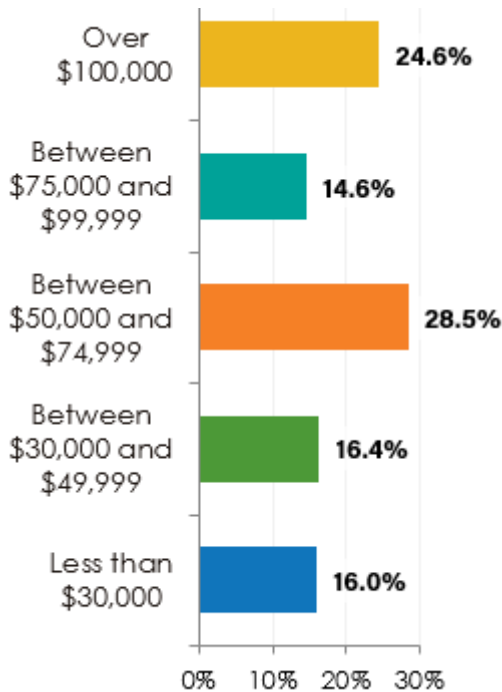


Have lived here at least 10 years

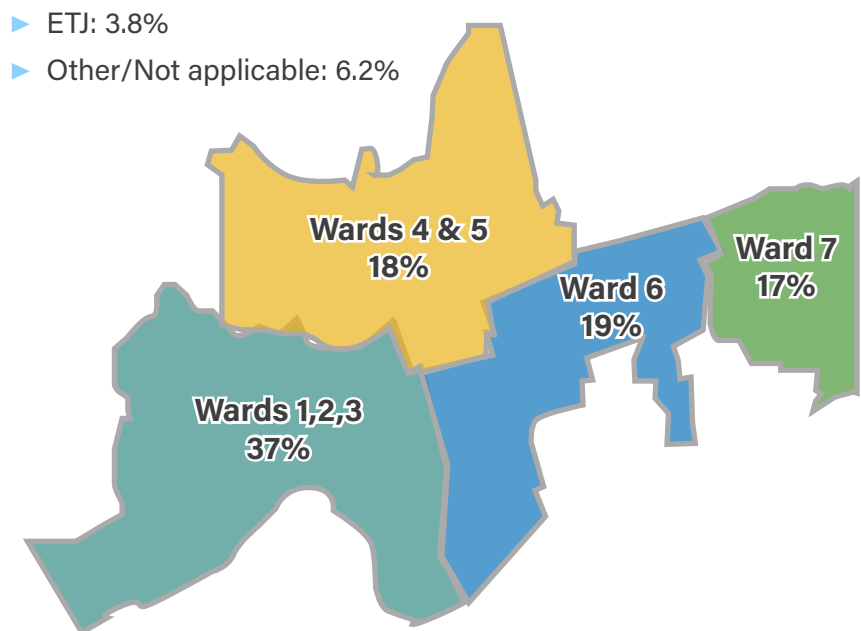


Were between ages 25-54

Yearly Household Income

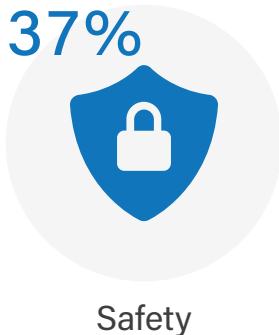
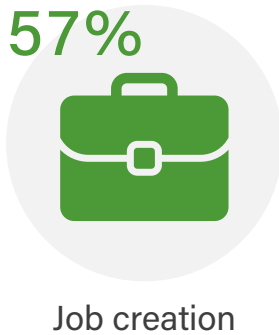


Where do you live or spend the most time?



Concerns

What are your top three concerns for the future of Eden?

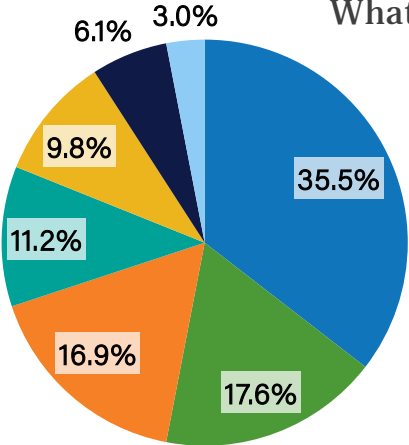


Priorities

What is the top priority you would like the Comprehensive Plan to accomplish or address? (selected responses)

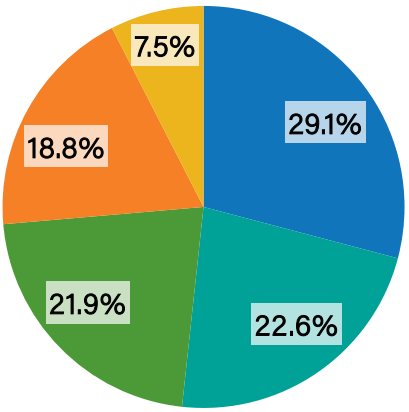
- ▶ "There should be more opportunity for small businesses to come in, use the old warehouses, use the old train stations"
- ▶ "Safety"
- ▶ "Revitalization of downtown areas"
- ▶ "Finish walking trails, develop recreational river trips - would be not only a source of income but also draw visitors to the area"
- ▶ "Job creation to help keep people from moving away"

What is your land use and development priority for Eden?



- Maintaining small town character
- Ensuring well-designed development
- Expanding the city's tax base and local jobs
- Conservation of open space and agricultural land
- Encouraging mixed-use development
- Encouraging different housing options
- Other (please specify)

What is your economic priority for Eden?



- Promote small businesses, i.e. downtown merchants
- Develop & promote incentives for large employers
- Promote, retain, & support existing employers
- Attract national retailers & restaurants
- Promote entertainment & tourism

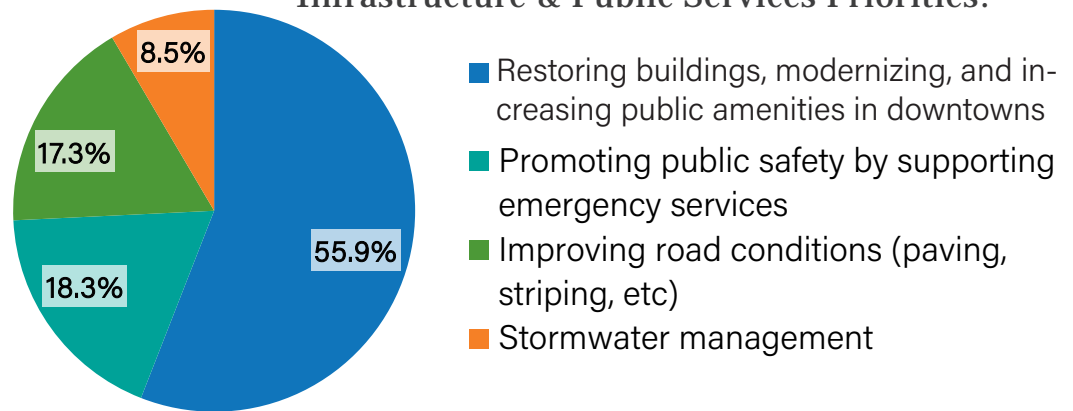
Priorities

From the priorities questions of the survey the following were selected as the top priority by respondents:

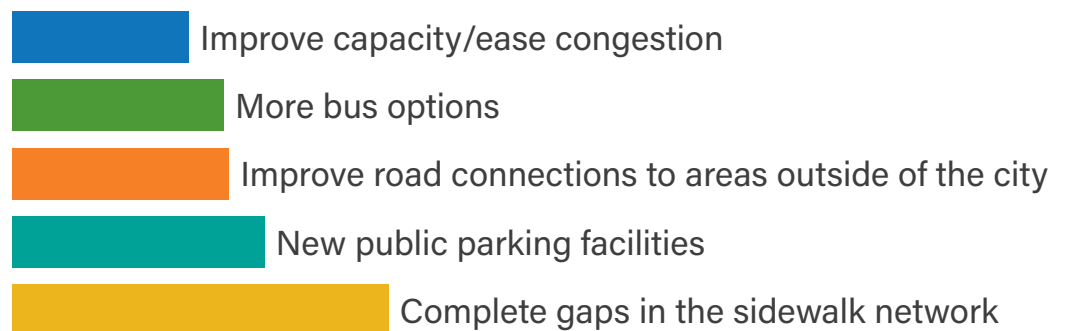
- ▶ Maintain small town character (*Land Use & Development*)
- ▶ Promote small business, i.e., downtown merchants (*Economic*)
- ▶ Restore buildings, modernize, and increase public amenities in downtowns (*Infrastructure & Public Services*)
- ▶ Increase energy efficiency and waste reduction in all sectors (*Environmental*)
- ▶ Improve roadway capacity and ease congestion (*Transportation*)

These indicate a strong desire to improve the core areas of Eden, not just in restoring historic buildings but also bringing them forward into this era with modern amenities and new small businesses that can meet community needs and provide neighborhood services.

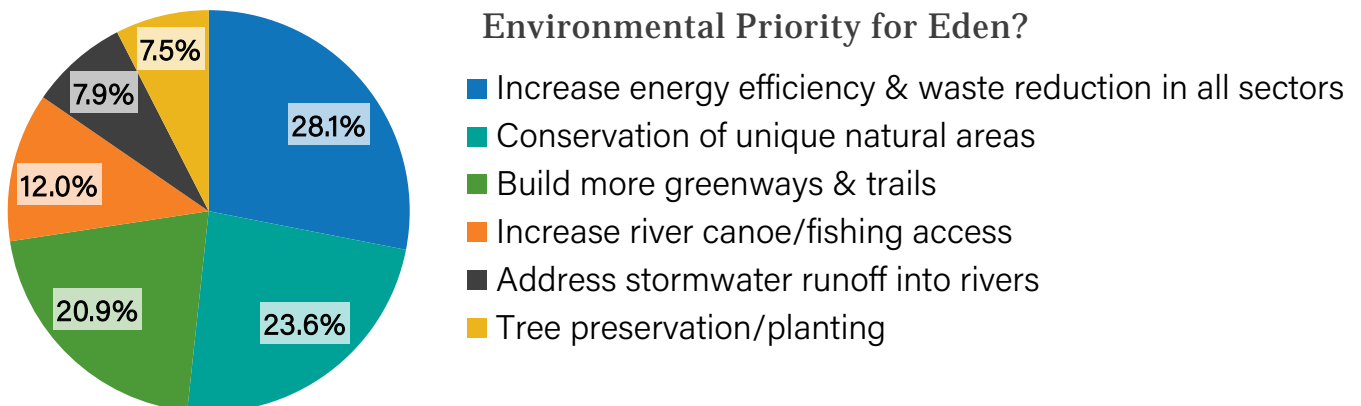
Infrastructure & Public Services Priorities:



Transportation Priorities for Eden, ranked 1-5 (1 is highest):



Environmental Priority for Eden?



Preferences

Preference questions gave respondents an opportunity to elaborate on what they would like to see for future development and the City’s growing greenway network.

To encourage their use of the greenways and trails in Eden, respondents want:

- ▶ More Access Points (27%)
- ▶ Better Connectivity to Destinations (25%)

Written in responses included amenities to improve safety, security, and accessibility, such as:

- ▶ Lighting
- ▶ Emergency call boxes
- ▶ ADA accessible inclines and access points
- ▶ Benches and picnic areas
- ▶ Restrooms



When asked about the types of housing they would like to see in or near Eden’s downtown areas, respondents choose:

- ▶ Pocket Neighborhoods (41%)
- ▶ Residential over commercial (32%)



When asked about the types of development that want to see more of (where appropriate), respondents chose:

- ▶ Small-scale commercial or retail (56%)
- ▶ Re-use or preservation of historic buildings (48%)

The next three answers were very evenly selected, indicating that respondents weighed these options as equally important:

- ▶ Large-scale commercial (37%)
- ▶ Industrial, large employers (36%)
- ▶ Recreation & tourism (35%)

Respondents strongly preferred free-standing houses with large yards (70%) if they were looking for a new home in Eden.

- ▶ Younger respondents were more willing to consider duplexes, townhomes, or patio homes as a second option to single family homes.

Aside from the type of



home, respondents said affordability (54%) was the most important factor in their decision. Next factors were:

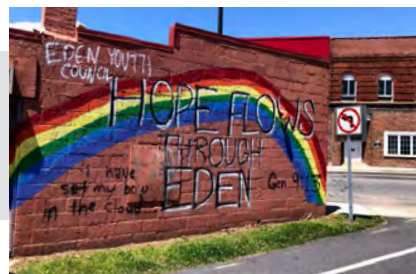
- ▶ Being located in a quieter or less developed areas (39%)
- ▶ Access to open space and recreation (24%)



Vision



“The City of Eden is a one-of-a-kind community where the Smith and Dan Rivers meet that builds on its people and history to create a place where all residents and businesses can thrive.”



Goals



ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

Eden strategically cultivates a **diverse economy** that supports upward mobility and businesses large and small.



GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS

Eden’s old and new neighborhoods offer **varied, accessible housing options** for all types of residents where families grow and communities gather.



SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWNS

Eden’s historic Downtowns are **communities with character** that offer housing, shopping, employment opportunities, and gathering spaces where residents and visitors enjoy spending time.



CULTURE & RECREATION

Eden’s parks, natural assets, events and cultural activities invite residents and tourists to explore, play, create and be entertained, making it a **top destination** in the region.



CITY SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Eden’s public infrastructure and utilities consistently deliver **high quality, efficient services** to customers.



CIVIC PRIDE

Eden’s commitment to its **community building, engagement, safety, and maintenance** makes people and businesses proud to call Eden home.



KEEP
What should stay?
What do you cherish?

TOSS
What don't you like?
What causes...

CRE
What do...

**What would you Keep? Toss? or Create?
the post-it notes to tell us what and why**

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This Chapter offers policy recommendations and strategies related to land use and housing, natural resources and parks, economic development, infrastructure, and mobility.

The policy recommendations provide overarching guidance on key topics. Individual strategies provide more specific direction for different areas of Eden, revisions to regulations, programs, and projects.

Recommendations are divided into five sections:

- Future Land Use Map and Character Areas
- Land Use and Housing
- Parks and Natural Resources
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure and Public Services
- Transportation and Mobility

Following the recommendations sections is an Action Plan that identified priority actions that are meant to be priorities in the next 1-5 years.

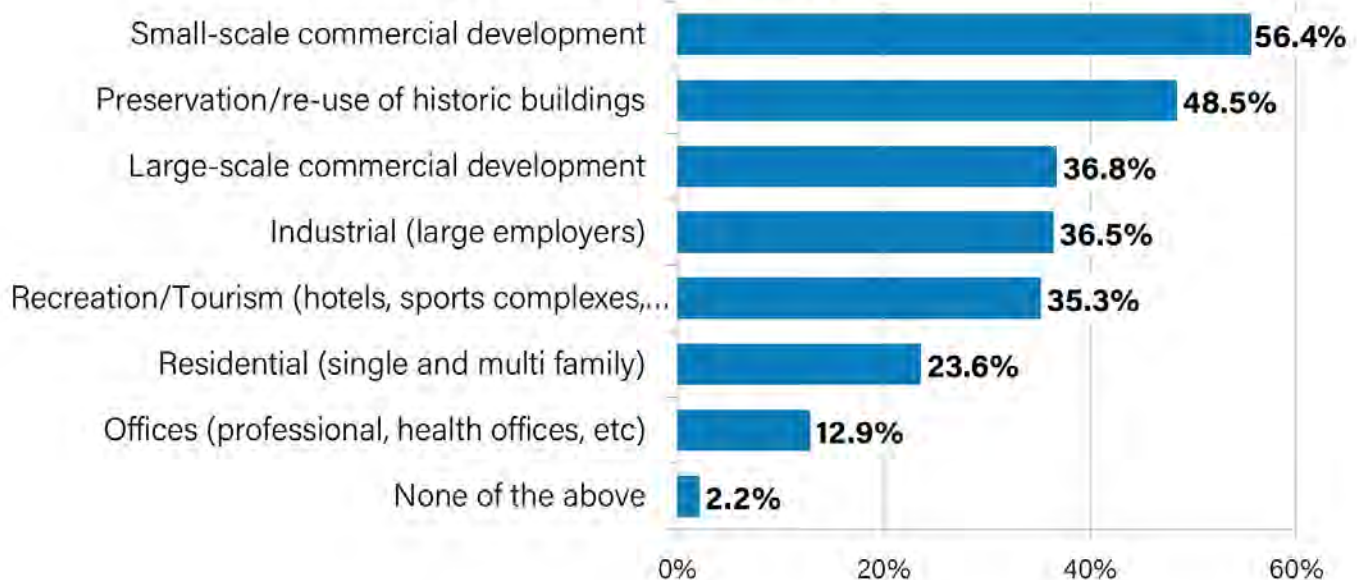
Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map and associated character areas are the official guides for land use and infrastructure decisions within Eden’s corporate limits and ETJ.

The future land use map illustrates the desired land use pattern based on historic character, availability of infrastructure and community feedback. It has been designed to help realize the Plan’s Vision and Goals and includes:

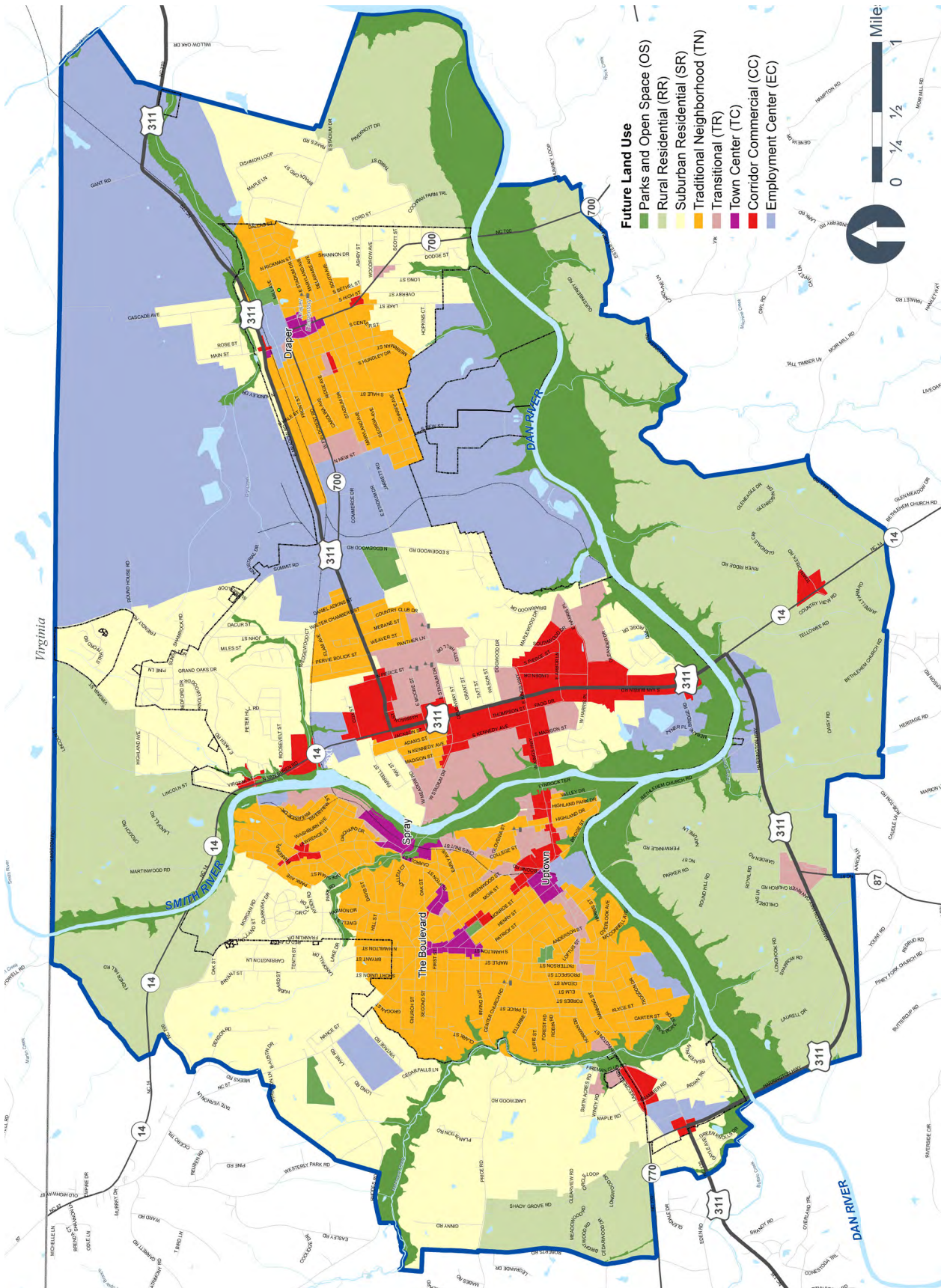
- » Three residential categories that identify areas where new residential growth is encouraged.
- » Areas to encourage infill and redevelopment in and near the City’s historic downtowns.
- » Employment Centers reserved for future employers.
- » A flexible approach to development in areas where a mix of non-residential uses and residential uses is appropriate.

What types of development would you like to see more of in Eden, where appropriate? (choose up to three)



Survey results indicated that commercial development, preservation and reuse of historic buildings and industrial development were the top 3-4 priorities for citizens of Eden. The Future Land Use map and policy recommendations later in this chapter address these priorities by providing ample location for small and large commercial businesses, reserving areas for future employment centers and prioritizing infill and reuse of structures in historic downtowns and neighborhoods.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (PARKOS)



The Parks and Open Space designation applies to public recreational areas and open-space areas. Uses include agriculture, wildlife management, active and passive recreation, environmental preservation, open space, and educational uses. Structures that support or are associated with the intended uses should be permitted.

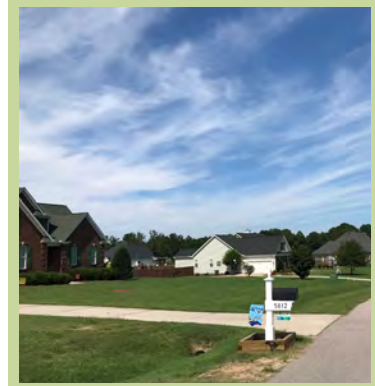


RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR)

Rural Residential areas are primarily located outside of existing and future sewer service areas. Most of these areas rely on septic systems for wastewater treatment, and have a limited existing road network. The predominate existing land uses in these areas include low-density residential uses, as well as large tracts of agriculture land. Single family residential at gross densities up to two units per acre are appropriate. Conservation subdivisions where new development is clustered away from natural resources or environmentally sensitive land is encouraged if new development is connected to sewer. Larger lots should be required if new development is not connected to sewer.

Uses and Intensity

- **Typical Uses:** Agriculture, Single-family Residential (Large Lot and Clustered (dependent on soils or utility availability)), Parks and Conservation
- **Gross Residential Density:** Up to 2 dwelling units/acre if connected to City water and sewer, lot size dependent on soils if on well and septic.
- **Lots Size and Open Space:** Large lots if on septic systems. At least 30% open space if lots are under 20,000 square feet and development is connected to city sewer. Open space should be passive recreation areas that are sensitive to natural features such as floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands, riparian areas, mature forests, and wildlife habitat areas.



SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL (SR)



Areas designated as Suburban Residential are intended to remain predominantly suburban in character and provide for medium-density, single-family residential development on smaller lots than those in Rural Residential areas. Future Suburban Residential development should be located near existing neighborhoods and water and sewer connections to avoid leapfrog development and isolated neighborhoods. Mixed-residential uses may occur to support conservation of open space and natural resources but should rarely exceed a gross density of 4 units per acre. Efforts should be made to allow for pedestrian connectivity and connections to Eden’s planned and existing greenway system.



Uses and Intensity

- **Typical Uses:** Single-family Residential, Agriculture, Parks and Conservation
- **Gross Residential Density:** up to 4 dwelling units/acre
- **Unit Type and Open Space:** Max of 25% Attached Units, Minimum of 20% open space in new subdivisions. Open space should be a mix of preserved natural features (such as riparian areas and steep slopes) with passive recreation such as greenways and trails and more formal open space such as common greens, playgrounds, or sports fields.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD (TN)

The Traditional Neighborhood area is comprised predominantly of older neighborhoods that grew around Eden’s historic downtowns. These areas feature smaller lots and provide a transition from the more urban downtowns (Town Center areas) to suburban residential areas. The Traditional Neighborhood category is designed to retain established neighborhoods and maintain their historic character while allowing some flexibility of housing types. Single-family homes are located on small lots that match existing patterns. Development in the Traditional Neighborhood areas can include a variety of housing types including single family homes, duplexes, townhomes, pocket neighborhoods, and well-designed house-scale multifamily buildings. To encourage walkability to the Town Center areas, streets should have pedestrian facilities. Infill is encouraged on vacant parcels.



Uses and Intensity

- **Typical Uses:** Residential (all forms)
- **Gross Residential Density:** 4-8 Dwelling Units per Acre (DUA)
- **Unit Type and Open Space:** Mostly single family units, however a mix of housing unit types is allowed for infill if designed to fit with existing properties. Infill subdivisions should incorporate some public space in the form of preserved natural features or more formal open space such as common greens, plazas, and/or playgrounds.

TRANSITIONAL (TR)



This designation applies to areas outside of Eden’s downtowns and corridor commercial areas. These areas are home to a mix of uses including civic, office, multi-family housing, entertainment, and some supportive commercial uses such as retail and services. It provides a transition from active centers to more residential areas and as such, is not intended for heavy commercial uses such as big box stores and high impact uses. This area is a natural fit for civic and institutional uses such as schools, government offices, hospitals and religious institutions. New development in this area may consist of light commercial, offices, multi-story mixed-use buildings and a variety of residential uses. Pedestrian facilities should be connected within the site and to nearby residential areas. Buildings should be located near the street on at least one side, with parking to the side or rear.

Uses and Intensity

- **Typical Uses:** Retail, offices, professional services, civic, multifamily residential. A variety of existing uses are expected to continue as well.
- **Gross Residential Density:** 6-12 units/acre
- **Unit Type and Open Space:** Single family homes, townhomes and multi-family residential units. Minimum of 10% Open space in subdivisions. Open space may take the form of natural areas, plazas, or amenities.

CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL (CC)



These areas feature larger-scale commercial and office uses, oriented along and around major thoroughfares and highways. Corridor commercial uses typically serve a local or even regional market. This area provides necessary retail and services in multi-tenant developments typically anchored by a large retailer or employer. It is more automobile-oriented than the Town Center or Transitional areas, but efforts should be made to provide pedestrian and vehicle connectivity and to consolidate vehicular access points between parcels to avoid congestion along major thoroughfares. Some light manufacturing and multi-family developments may be allowed where appropriate.

Uses and Intensity

- **Typical Uses:** Retail, offices, professional services, civic, multifamily residential, light industrial.
- **Gross Residential Density:** 6-12 units/acre
- **Unit Type and Open Space:** Multi-family residential is typical. Minimum of 10% Open space in apartment and condo development. Open space may take the form of natural areas, plazas, or amenities.

TOWN CENTER (TC)

This designation is applied to the City’s historic downtown areas where the highest-density commercial, employment, residential and other uses are located. It is intended to foster an urban environment characterized by a sensitive blending of preserved and renovated older structures, high-quality and context-sensitive new construction, and public spaces that integrate with surrounding neighborhoods. The Town Center accommodates a variety of uses including commercial services (restaurants, retail, services, and entertainment), office, high-density residential, upper-story apartments, and older homes renovated to accommodate commercial uses. These areas create a regional and local draw. Development is accessed by a convenient road network in a grid pattern with a pedestrian-friendly system of sidewalks. Buildings are set close to the street and new block sizes should be no longer than 500 feet on an edge.

Uses and Intensity

- **Typical Uses:** Small retail, office, restaurants, services, upper-story residential. A variety of existing uses are expected to continue as well.
- **Gross Residential Density:** No maximum.
- **Unit Type and Open Space:** Single family, homes on narrow lots, multi-family residential, and residential units above commercial or office space. No minimum open space, but public space in the form of plazas is encouraged.



EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Eden’s Employment Center is designated on the Future Land Use Map to provide locations for primary employment and economic development opportunities. Employment Centers are typically located along major transportation corridors, have adequate levels of infrastructure or potential to make infrastructure connections, and are on parcels large enough to accommodate future employment growth.

Uses and Intensity

- **Typical Uses:** Uses encouraged in the Employment Center include but are not limited to, industrial, warehouse, office, research and development, tech-flex, hospital, renewable energy, recycling, fabrication, assembly, and technology. Employment Center uses may also include a limited amount of supporting commercial uses, such as restaurants and convenience retailers to serve employees. However, these uses should only be situated where not in conflict with existing employment land uses and should not be built in such a way as to jeopardize the use of those lands most suitable for office or industrial development.



Land Use and Housing


In all sections, recommendations that support or clarify suggestions from Eden's Strategic Plan are denoted by this symbol:



Policy LU 1: Encourage infill development where utility and transportation infrastructure exist.

LU 1.1: Encourage mixed use development with residential above retail or office uses in downtown commercial areas.

LU 1.2: Encourage infill development on vacant lots in established neighborhoods in the City.

LU 1.3: Consider infill incentive programs in historic Downtowns and surrounding neighborhoods. 

- » An infill incentive program to offset development fees or construction costs for projects meeting certain criteria in areas with existing infrastructure and services.

- » Consider offering a Building Improvement Incentive Grant for renovation of downtown buildings and a Residential Development Incentive Grant for constructing new housing units for sale on vacant parcels of land within areas with existing infrastructure.

LU 1.4: Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of mill buildings as commercial and employment centers.

- » Construction of Spray Cotton is anticipated to begin soon, and can be used as inspiration for future reuse of other mills.
- » Encourage reuse of Nantucket Mill in the future.

REUSE OF MILLS

Eden is home to a number of historic mill buildings. Renovation and reuse of these buildings as apartments, condos, offices or mixed use destinations can help preserve history, add new homes and increase the City's tax base. Mill renovations may be eligible for federal and/or state Historic Tax Credits. The Rhode Island Mill along the Smith River was designated a historic landmark by the Eden City Council in 2000. The developer received \$5.1 million in state tax credits and \$500,000 in federal tax credits and was renovated into apartments in 2001.



Policy LU 2: Encourage new single-family subdivisions in areas that can be easily served by City water and sewer.

LU 2.1: Continue to offer infrastructure reimbursement policy for certain types of residential and nonresidential development.

LU 2.2: Encourage rezonings to allow for new residential subdivisions in the Suburban Residential (SR) and Traditional Neighborhood (TR) areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy LU 3: Encourage a mix of housing types.

- » Feedback shows a growing demand for housing in the Eden area including higher-end single family residential, townhomes and apartments/condos.

LU 3.1: In Rural Residential Areas encourage subdivisions with larger lots or conservation subdivisions if new development is connected to water and sewer.

- » The rural character in these areas can be preserved by encouraging low-intensity uses and context-sensitive rural design.

LU 3.2: In new single-family subdivisions, encourage a mix of lot sizes.

LU 3.3: Encourage a mix of housing types through the rezoning of properties to R12, R6, and RMX in areas with access to public water and sewer and adequate transportation facilities.

LU 3.4: Allow for pocket neighborhoods and small-scale multi-family housing in transition areas between downtown commercial areas and single family neighborhoods.

- » Pocket neighborhoods can be an attractive form of housing for seniors and young families due to shared open space and low maintenance.
- » Small-scale multi-family housing, also known as “missing middle housing” includes duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes, and small-format townhomes (<=6 units in structure).

LU 3.5: Consider adjustments to regulations to encourage accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

- » Currently the UDO restricts ADUs to 50% of the living area of the principal structure or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less. This may be overly restrictive in areas with small home sizes.



POCKET NEIGHBORHOODS

This type of development includes small single-family homes oriented around a shared greenspace. They can make use of larger vacant lots or clusters of lots that may not be large enough for multiple traditional lots or multi-family housing. Encouraging these types of developments near downtowns and other commercial areas can also be a way to allow housing variety while preserving the single-family character of some streets.

Policy LU 4: Commercial Corridors

LU 4.1: Encourage a variety of commercial types in areas shown as Commercial Corridors on the Future Land Use Map including non-residential infill on lots just off of main roads.

LU 4.2: Consider some higher density residential on vacant properties where appropriate.

LU 4.3: Encourage connectivity to local roads and driveway consolidation.

Policy LU 5: Improve the Van Buren Road / NC-14 Corridor.

LU 5.1: Develop a NC-14 Corridor Study to address safety, function and appearance issues and undertake a few pilot project improvements to build community interest and support.

- » As a separate effort or part of the corridor study coordinate with NCDOT on the Kings Hwy intersection improvement project to determine final design and future opportunities for beautification and potentially even redevelopment of unused right of way.
- » Consider enhancing architectural or site design standards for development on the corridor.

LU 5.2: Study the potential addition of sidewalks and the addition of pedestrian signals in key areas.

Policy LU 6: Enforce City ordinances.

LU 6.1: Continue efforts to enforce local ordinances for residential, commercial, and all other applicable properties.

LU 6.2: Continue to provide funding for City's affirmative maintenance efforts, such as the removal of junk cars and litter from properties.

LU 6.3: Continue the SeeClickFix program to identify needed enforcement locations.



The intersection improvement that is planned for Kings Highway and Van Buren Road (TIP Project Number U-5893) will improve traffic flow along two main arterials in the City of Eden. The project may leave unused right-of-way in all four quadrants as it was originally envisioned to be an interchange. This right-of-way is an opportunity for beautification or infill development.

DOWNTOWN AREAS

.....
Policy LU 7: Identify and implement public realm improvement projects. SP

- » Study opportunities for plantings, streetscape improvements, street furniture and lighting, and park improvements.

Policy LU 8: Create Small Area Plans for all of Eden’s historic downtowns. SP

LU 8.1: Continue to execute Small Area Plans for all Historic Downtowns.

- » Small Area Plans can include additional community engagement to determine priority issues, potential solutions, and identities for individual neighborhoods.
- » The Uptown Eden / Leaksville Small Area Plan is part of this comprehensive plan (see page 49.)
- » Future priorities include Draper and the Boulevard.

Policy LU 9: Support the small businesses that make up the heart of historic downtowns.

LU 9.1: Coordinate regularly with merchants’ associations, businesses, and landowners on upcoming events and/or priority improvements.

LU 9.2: Continue to allow for a mix of land uses in downtown areas.

LU 9.3: Evaluate potential barriers to businesses including signage and parking regulations.

Policy LU 10: Continue and expand Historic Preservation Efforts.

LU 10.1: Continue to designate local landmarks.

LU 10.2: Empower the Historic Preservation Commission to provide feedback on development proposals in designated historic districts.

LU 10.3: Update and expand the historic walking tour to include online / digital option accessed via QR codes on kiosks or signage.

LU 10.4: Continue Facade Grant program.

.....
Policy LU 11: Encourage adaptive reuse and restoration of historic structures to preserve Eden’s rich history.

LU 11.1: Promote Federal and State Historic Tax Credits by providing educational information and programs to property owners and developers.

LU 11.2: Educate property owners on the ability to combine Historic Tax Credits (HIC), Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), and New Market Tax Credits (NMTC).

Policy LU 12: Encourage building maintenance and active uses in historic downtowns.

LU 12.1: Enforce safety issues for vacant and/or deteriorating buildings, especially in historic downtowns.

LU 12.2: Maintain a vacant properties inventory.

LU 12.3: Enforce vacant commercial property registration requirement in the Unified Development Ordinance, monitor its effectiveness and consider updates as needed to protect property values and neighborhood character while enhancing the pedestrian experience.

- » Precedent: Ayden, NC-Downtown Vacant Building Ordinance

LU 12.4: Consider adopting a Demolition by Neglect ordinance as mentioned in Article 3 of the existing Unified Development Ordinance.

LU 12.5: Encourage active uses along principle commercial streets in historic downtowns.

Parks and Natural Resources

Policy NR 1: Continued support for recreational programming.

NR 1.1: Continue support and funding for youth recreation leagues.

NR 1.2: Consider expanding skills-based programmed activities for youth and enhancements to senior programming.

Policy NR 2: Enhance neighborhood parks.

NR 2.1: Prioritize maintenance issues and the following projects at Freedom Park:

- » Expand the playground and add picnic shelters
- » Relocate maintenance area
- » Study the addition of an aquatic facility or pool near the splashpad.

NR 2.2: Continue budgeting for updates to other neighborhood parks as specified in the 2017 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Policy NR 3: Work with partners to expand recreational offerings to meet demand. SP

NR 3.1: Prioritize expanding recreational offerings to address needs identified in the 2017 Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

- » Priorities from 2017 Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan included Senior Programs and Activity Center, Fitness Room, Picnic Shelters, a Farmers Market and Trails.

NR 3.2: Add pickleball courts where feasible.

- » Many citizens expressed a desire for more pickleball courts during the development of this plan. Current plans include the addition

PRIORITY PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Park	Priority Improvements
Freedom Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the playground, add picnic shelters, and relocate maintenance area • Study addition of aquatic facility or pool
Morgan Road Park / Senior Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resurface courts and add pickleball lines • Add lighting around the courts and playground area • Add outdoor restrooms and senior playground equipment
Mill Ave Recreation Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade playground equipment and install a game and activities room • Regularly repair gym floor • Install air condition in the gym
Bridge Street Recreation Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace playground surface material and install new playground equipment • Repair fencing around park boundary
Dehart Ball park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove old swings • Remove fencing around outfield and add curbs or bollards to prevent vehicles on ball field grounds
Ernestine Hampton Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair soccer goals and resurface walking track • Replace picnic tables

of pickleball courts at Morgan Road Park and Bridge Street Recreation Center.

Policy NR 4: Improve signage and expand promotional activities related to parks.

NR 4.1: Enhance or replace signage for existing parks and major facilities within parks.

NR 4.2: Develop a park facility and recreational program guide/brochure.

- » This guide could include key information on facilities and recreational programs provided by the City and area partners.

Policy NR 5: Improve connection to rivers and river safety.

NR 5.1: Improve river access with the addition of places to see and congregate along the rivers edge.

- » Enhancements could include the addition of benches, picnic tables and shelters at existing access points.
- » Conduct a feasibility study of improvements to the west bank of the Smith River in the vicinity of Spray to determine if there are possibilities to improve access to the river.
- » Study preservation and reuse of the trestle over the Smith River.

NR 5.2: Create a citywide effort to increase community awareness of and interaction with rivers.

NR 5.3: Introduce wayfinding, signage, and emergency kayak pull over areas along the Smith and Dan Rivers.



► Confluence Park, Denver, Colorado

Image Source: Simon Foot via flickr

Policy NR 6: Maintain, upgrade, and expand Eden’s Greenway System. SP

NR 6.1: Priorities include connections to

- » Residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other destinations;
- » Leaksville to Dan River;
- » Spray to Freedom Park (old rail corridor);
- » Leaksville to Spray connection;
- » Dan River Trail.

NR 6.2: Continue to invest in additional amenities such as benches, mile markers, and educational signage at trailheads and along greenways.

NR 6.3: Prioritize greenway safety by introducing lighting at key locations.

NR 6.4: Promote greenways as a place for healthy recreation.

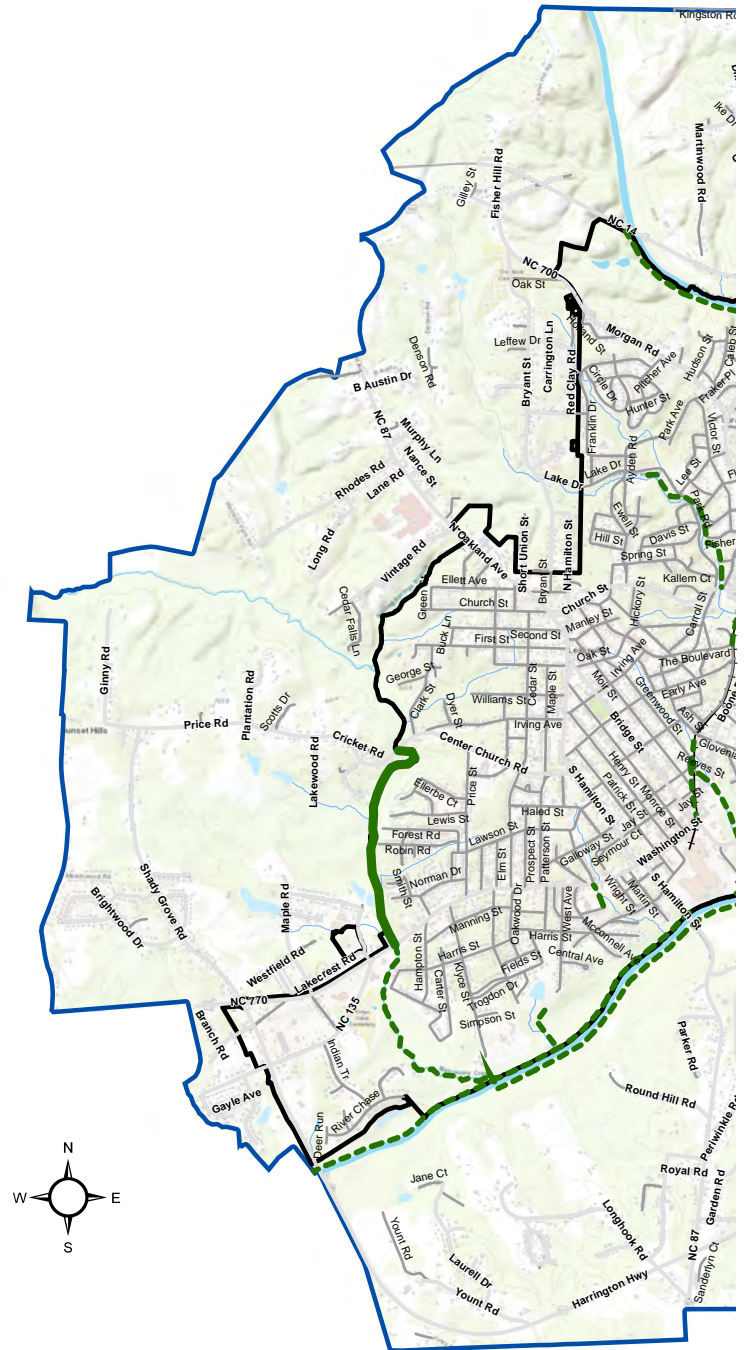
NR 6.5: Connect greenways to neighborhoods and destinations with targeted pedestrian network improvements.

- » The 2017 Parks and Recreation Plan and the recent Pedestrian Plan have identified a number of sidewalk connections near parks that would improve accessibility.

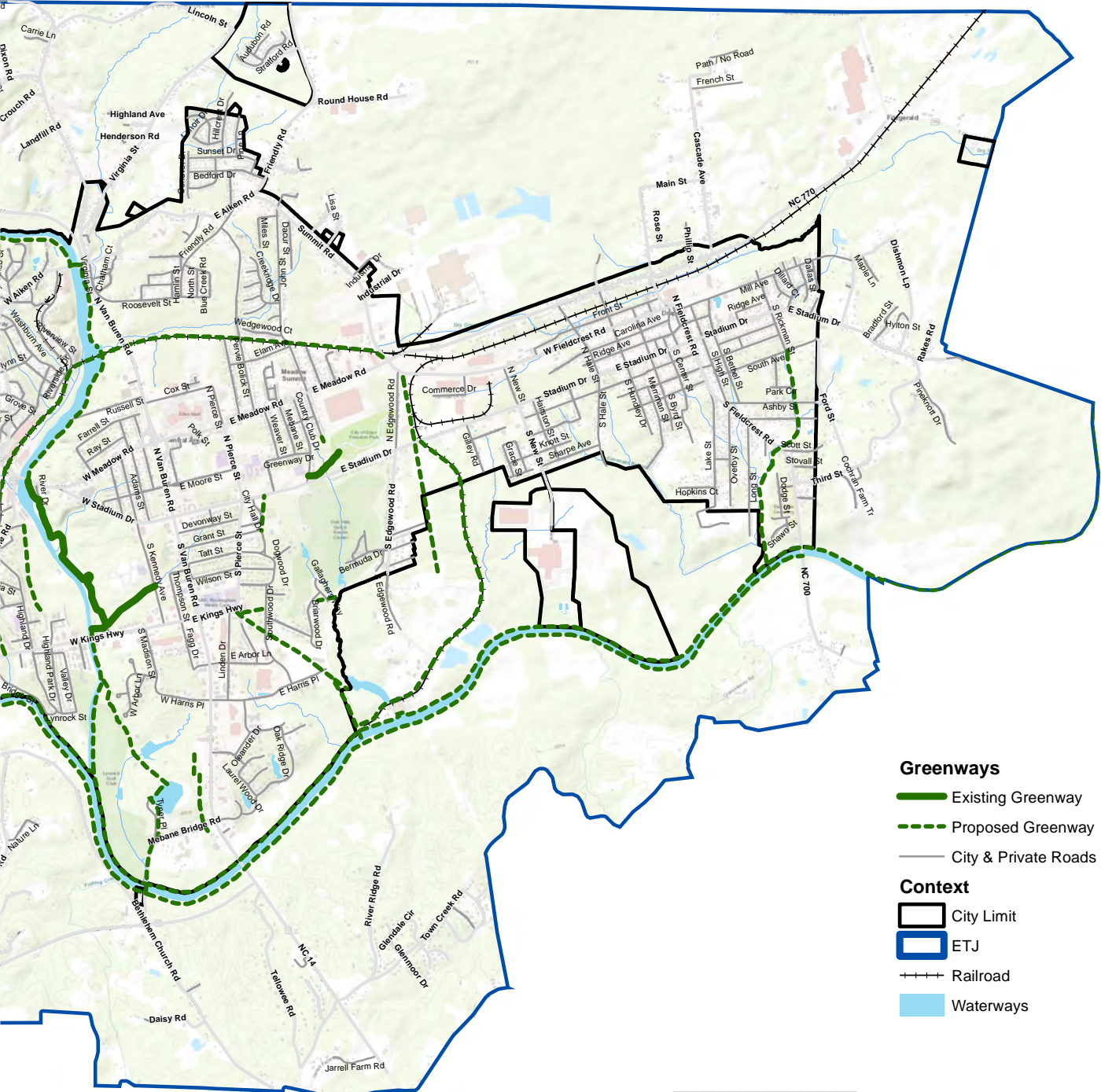
NR 6.6: Prioritize a new greenway trail in the eastern part of the City, where no trails currently exist.

- » Determine feasibility of adding a section of the Dan River Trail in the vicinity of Draper Boat Landing
- » A long-term goal would be to connect Draper to the Dan River via sidewalks and/or trails.

Policy NR 7: Work with regional partners to determine the feasibility of planning for equestrian trails in the greater Eden area.



EXISTING AND PLANNED GREENWAYS MAP



Greenways and trails improve quality of life by offering recreational opportunities and expanding public access along rivers and creeks. The map above shows existing and planned trails in the City of Eden’s ETJ.

Policy NR 8: Conserve natural resources and protect water quality.

NR 8.1: Encourage the preservation of natural resources in the City of Eden including rivers, streams, mature forests, steep slopes, wetlands, and floodplains.

NR 8.2: Continue to require preservation of stream buffers in new development.

NR 8.3: Consider incentives for preservation of riparian vegetation outside of minimum stream buffers.

NR 8.4: Require adequate storm drainage for new development and practices that direct stormwater away from surface waters and incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize water quality impacts.

NR 8.5: Consider incentives for green stormwater infrastructure (i.e. rain gardens, bioretention areas, stormwater planters and other features that increase infiltration) in new development.

Policy NR 9: Encourage the protection of open space in new development.

NR 9.1: Continue to require a minimum amount of open space in most new larger-scale residential developments.

- » Require a percentage to be usable open space and natural open space.

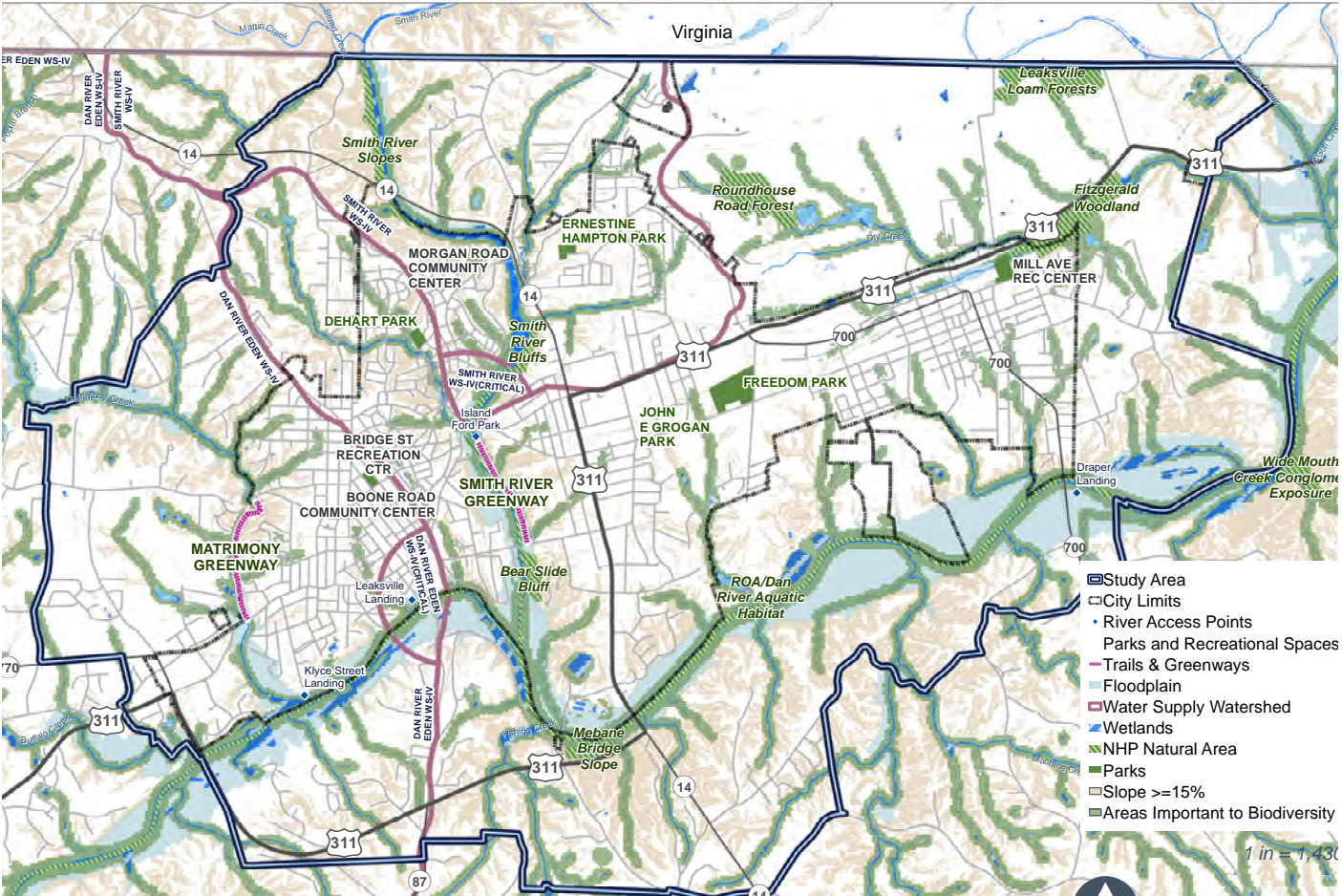
NR 9.2: Consider incentives to encourage cluster development (also known as conservation subdivisions) in areas with steep slopes and other natural resources.

- » Cluster Developments are allowed in the current Unified Development Ordinance, however updates may be needed to clarify that these types of development are encouraged in the following areas:
 - On properties including or adjacent to areas designated as Parks and Open Space (OS) on the Future Land Use map. These areas primarily include public parks and floodplains.
 - In areas adjacent to designated Natural Heritage Natural Areas (see Chapter 5).
 - In areas located near the Smith or Dan rivers.
 - In areas located near existing or planned greenways.
 - On properties with significant steep slopes.

NR 9.3: Encourage the use of native trees in required landscaping and the preservation of mature trees.

- » Regularly update list of preferred species for use in required landscaping.
- » Continue incentivizing tree preservation.
 - Currently parking requirements can be reduced if a site plan provides for the retention of large, healthy trees.

NATURAL RESOURCES MAP



The City of Eden is home to many natural resources including wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, designated Natural Heritage Program Natural Areas, and areas that drain to water supply intakes along the Dan and Smith rivers. These resources should be protected from degradation by encouraging sensitive design of new development.

Economic Development

Policy ED 1: Reserve and market prime sites for major employers. SP

ED 1.1: Preserve areas suitable for business and industrial development, as identified by the Future Land Use Map, for employment.

ED 1.2: Avoid rezonings of identified employment land for major residential subdivisions or other uses that could impact the viability of future employment centers.

Policy ED 2: Support local small business network. SP

ED 2.1: Support small businesses and entrepreneurship through work with Eden Chamber of Commerce and other local organizations.

ED 2.2: Leverage Downtowns and their available building stock as prime locations for small businesses.

ED 2.3: Regularly communicate with local businesses and business organizations to collect feedback on the impact of City efforts on the business community.

ED 2.4: With the Chamber of Commerce, develop and distribute resources for local entrepreneurs.

Policy ED 3: Strengthen the relationship between schools and employers to retain young talent and fill employment gaps.

ED 3.1: Partner with Rockingham Community College (RCC) and local employers to identify employment needs. Work with RCC, local high schools, and other partners to train and develop a skilled workforce to meet identified labor demands.

ED 3.2: Promote hiring locally to large and small employers.

A Home for all Businesses

Eden's economy depends on businesses of all types and sizes. Purina's planned 300+ jobs and \$450 million investment are a fantastic stimulus to the City's economy, but many jobs and a large percentage of private investment in the city is due to the small businesses that call Eden home. Looking forward it will be important to understand and plan for space and infrastructure needs of businesses of all sizes in order to support a thriving community.



Image via Purina



Storefronts on Washington Street in Leaksville / Uptown Eden

Policy ED 4: Continue to establish a brand and identity for Eden and market it to employers. SP

ED 4.1: Regularly update City marketing materials to include recent investments and improvements.

ED 4.2: Identify and promote Eden's marketable qualities and incorporate them into promotional materials.

ED 4.3: Support recreation, river access, and greenway improvements as investments in Eden's quality of life to attract employers.

ED 4.4: Incorporate the distinct identities of the Downtowns into promotional materials.

Policy ED 5: Leverage regional partnerships.

ED 5.1: Identify opportunities to leverage regional economic growth for Eden. For example, identify possible synergies with entities such as the future Danville casino.

Policy ED 6: Continue promoting Eden as a tourism destination and supporting efforts to improve its tourist attractions.

ED 6.1: Continue to promote the Explore Eden brand statewide.

ED 6.2: Continue investment in outdoor amenities and access to support Explore Eden efforts to develop the City's riverfront, greenway, and parks system.

ED 6.3: Embrace Eden's history as a tourism draw.

- » Repair signs and advertise Historic Walking Tour.

ED 6.4: Continue and expand local events calendar. Focus on adding events that draw visitors on a regional scale, such as Riverfest. SP

Policy ED 7: Continue to implement suggestions from the Strategic Plan.

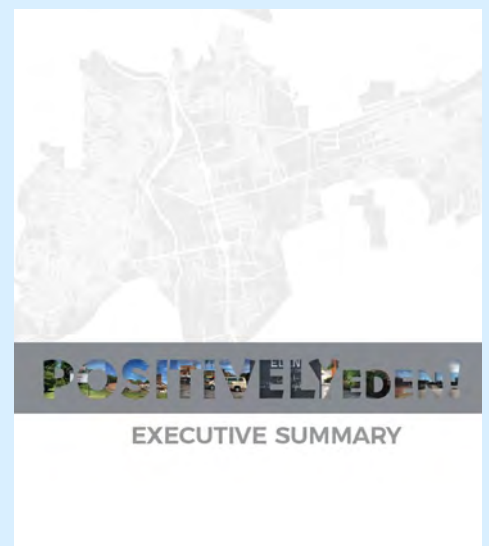
ED 7.1: Target recruitment of business and industry for which Eden has a "competitive advantage" as identified in the plan.

ED 7.2: Continue to invest in Eden's quality of place as a means by which to attract employers.

ED 7.3: Prioritize investment and improvements that will help attract and retain people in the younger working age group (25 to 34 year olds.)

Positively Eden Strategic Plan

Eden's Strategic Plan set a bold vision for the City and supplied strategies for attracting people and long-term private economic activity. It focuses on what the City has power to influence - its quality of place - as an economic development tool. It offers goals and strategies for improving the City's quality of place, as well as traditional economic development strategies. Over the lifespan of the plan, the City has hired staff, increased code enforcement, improved parks, and expanded greenways. Though the Plan is reaching the end of its five-year time horizon many recommendations are still relevant. This Comprehensive Plan incorporates many of the ideas from the Strategic Plan and the effort will continue to influence Eden's quality of place.



Infrastructure and Public Services

Policy INF 1: Continue to be proactive about water and sewer infrastructure needs.

INF 1.1: Develop a Water & Sewer Master Plan every five years to address ongoing needs, gauge success of maintenance and improvements, and remain eligible for state revolving loan projects and grants.

INF 1.2: Continue the Sewer Find & Fix It Program. Allocate at minimum \$50,000 per year for this program to reduce infiltration and inflow within the collection system.

INF 1.3: Continue to pursue federal funding for major waterline replacement projects.

INF 1.4: Continue to implement a water/sewer utilities financial strategy, including adequate rate structures, to ensure the alternatives selected are sufficiently funded, operated, maintained, and replaced over time.

INF 1.5: Coordinate with NCDOT to align roadway resurfacing projects with water line replacement schedules along state-maintained roadways.

INF 1.6: Ensure future water and wastewater infrastructure investments support desired growth patterns as described by the future land use map.

Policy INF 2: Continue to demonstrate a commitment to clean water and storm/flood resiliency.

INF 2.1: Continue to monitor and regularly clear the Dan River water intake to ensure that sedimentation does not impair water supply allocation or distribution.

INF 2.2: Conduct a peracetic acid disinfection pilot study for either the Water Plant or Wastewater Treatment Plant (or both).

INF 2.3: Prioritize the implementation of low impact development (LID) techniques and habitat-friendly development practices throughout the city for new development, redevelopment, and retrofitting existing development.

INF 2.4: Continue to use and maintain the City's truck-mounted meter data collection kits, which improve efficiency in day-to-day utility operations, meet demands for operational transparency, and enable staff to address discrepancies before they become a problem.

INF 2.5: Continue to pursue federal funding for major waterline replacement projects.

INF 2.6: Continue to finish EPA required projects to address sanitary sewer overflows

Policy INF 3: Maintain a safe community for all.

INF 3.1: Plan for long-term personnel, facility, and equipment needs of Eden Fire Department.

- » Determine cost effective ways to lower ISO rating.
- » Develop and maintain a 5-year replacement plan for major equipment.

INF 3.2: Plan for long-term personnel, facility, and equipment needs of Eden Police Department.

- » Identify and maintain an appropriate ratio of police officers to residents.

INF 3.3: Maintain safety in parks and greenways.

- » Ensure adequate access to greenways for emergency services and vehicles.
- » Address and map greenways and access points.
- » Consider mobile police units to cover greenway expansion (i.e. bicycle units.)

Policy INF 4: Increase broadband coverage and speed across the City for residents and businesses.

INF 4.1: Participate in local and regional partnerships to expand broadband options.

INF 4.2: Support efforts to increase broadband infrastructure, such as installing conduits in tandem with utility or other infrastructure work.

Policy INF 5: Balance solid waste fees and collections.

INF 5.1: Continue to represent City interests through memberships on Rockingham County's Solid Waste committee.

INF 5.2: Make a determination about short-term and long-term fee increases or changes in service to bring balance to the County's fund and the City's budget for processing solid waste.

INF 5.3: Consider limiting brush collection to certain months of the year.

INF 5.4: Conduct a solid waste study to evaluate where the City could reasonably cut costs and find appropriate savings, as well as consideration of fair methodology to more accurately charge customers based on overall quantity, without diminishing level of service.

INF 5.5: Continue to promote and encourage recycling through private collection services.



Transportation and Mobility

Policy TR 1: Invest in streetscape and parking upgrades in the central business areas.

TR 1.1: Continue to enhance the commercial centers in Eden by identifying and implementing small win projects (plantings, lighting, street furniture, parks improvements, bulb-outs, shade trees, etc). **SP**

TR 1.2: Acquire land for public parking, either through purchasing areas or making lease agreements with property owners.

TR 1.3: Improve parking management and consider changes in time restricted parking near businesses that need high-turnover spaces.

Policy TR 2: Fund and schedule roadway maintenance. **SP**

TR 2.1: Conduct a pavement condition survey every five to ten years to accurately identify the right pavement preservation, maintenance, and repair strategy for each City-maintained roadway segment.

TR 2.2: Strive to keep up with roadway preservation and maintenance by sustaining an annual repaving allocation that meets forecasted needs.

- » The most recent conditions assessment indicates that a minimum of \$1 million per fiscal year is needed to keep up with resurfacing needs on city streets.

Policy TR 3: Partner with NCDOT and Rockingham County on regional roadway improvements.

TR 3.1: Coordinate with Rockingham County and Piedmont Triad RPO to update the NCDOT-funded Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

- » This plan should include identification of collector street connection needs and could

help to provide clear recommendations to NCDOT and private development for expanding and improving the transportation network.

TR 3.2: Support STIP project U-5893: Improvements to the intersection of West Kings Highway (SR 1962) and South Van Buren Road.

TR 3.3: Work with the Piedmont Triad RPO to allocate funding to extend Harrington Highway (US 311) on both ends.

- » Follow the Dan River to the east and connecting to South Fieldcrest Road (NC 700) and heading north to link with Old State Highway 87 and NC 14.

TR 3.4: Advocate for the remainder of Highway 29 to be upgraded to I-785 to the Virginia line and included as part of NCDOT's future STIP.

TR 3.5: Make sure that the City of Eden is represented at all Rockingham County Transportation Advisory Board meetings.

Policy TR 4: Identify opportunities to improve pedestrian safety, connectivity, accessibility, and comfort.

TR 4.1: Implement recommendations from the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan.

- » Incorporate recommended spot projects into other infrastructure improvement projects where possible.

Policy TR 5: Prioritize roadway safety for all users.

TR 5.1: Support NCDOT’s Complete Streets policy in all street infrastructure projects. Explore policies that support active transportation such as Complete Streets, school siting policies, and financial incentives to developers.

TR 5.2: Coordinate with NCDOT and the Piedmont Triad Regional Council to improve intersection safety with additional roundabouts in Eden.

TR 5.3: Participate in the State’s Safe Routes to School Program to implement initiatives related to safety and transportation. Participation in this program can help improve non-automobile transportation access for all members of the community.

TR 5.4: Regularly evaluate and update the City’s UDO to address mobility needs. Target areas

include sidewalk standards, connectivity requirements, and access management standards.

TR 5.5: Continue to refine roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvement strategies through the small area planning process.

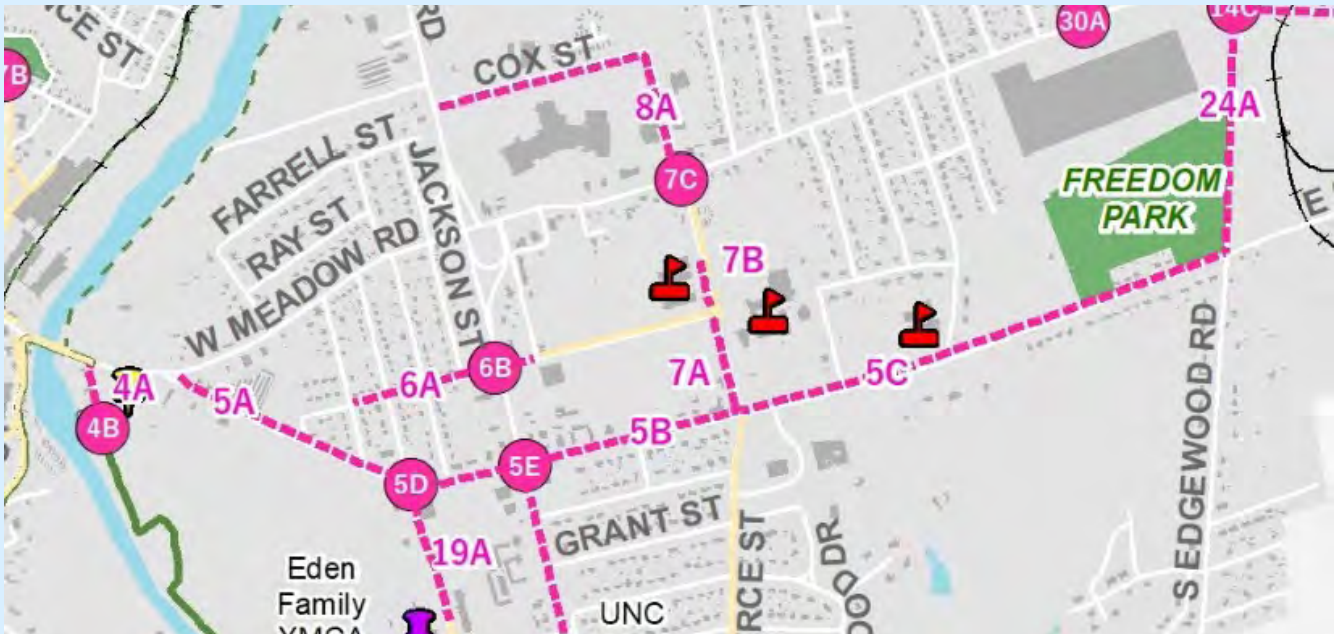
Policy TR 6: Expand transit strategically.

TR 6.1: Evaluate new stops and routes annually. When determining new routes and stops for transit service, prioritize destinations that serve Eden’s senior citizens and other vulnerable populations.

TR 6.2: Establish a minimum standard of accessibility design at all of Eden’s SKAT bus stops, with a hierarchy of elements to include at each stop (ADA pad, bench, shelter, garbage receptacle) and regular funding for these elements. Prioritize implementation based on the average number of riders at each stop.

Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

Eden recently updated its Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan to improve pedestrian safety, connectivity, and wellbeing through recommendations for infrastructure projects and community policies and programs. Many of its suggestions support and/or expand on recommendations in this plan. It introduces some big ideas, such as greenways along both sides of the Dan River, and some smaller but integral moves, such as pedestrian spot projects at key locations around the City. The City should continue to implement the Pedestrian Plan, and reference it during future greenway and small area planning. The map below, taken from the Pedestrian Plan, shows how the plan combines spot projects, linear projects, and greenway expansion to connect existing greenways and desired destinations.



Action Plan

This plan will be implemented every time a City staff member, board, commission, or elected official makes a decision that supports the Plan’s goals. To aid in the long-term implementation of the larger aspects of this Plan, this table has been created. It shows specific action steps, responsible parties, and expected time frame. It is not a complete list of implementation actions, but more of a guide for the City, and is subject to change and review.

- Short term: 1-2 years
- Medium-term: 2-3 years
- Long-term: 3+ years

Goal	Implementation Steps	Responsible Party	Time-Frame
ECONOMIC DIVERSITY			
ED 1: Reserve and market prime sites for major employers	Avoid rezoning of identified employment land for residential subdivisions or other non-employment uses	Planning & Community Development City Council	Ongoing
	Preserve areas suitable for business and industrial development, as identified by the Future Land Use Map, for employment.	Planning & Community Development City Council	Ongoing
ED 2: Support local small business network	Communicate with local businesses and business organizations to collect feedback on the impact of City efforts on the business community.	Economic Partners (Chamber of Commerce, Merchants’ groups) Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
	Develop and distribute resources for local entrepreneurs (with Chamber of Commerce)	Economic Partners (Chamber of Commerce, Merchants’ groups) Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
ED 4: Continue to establish a brand and identity for Eden and market it to employers.	Regularly update promotional materials to include recent investments and improvements. Include the distinct identities of the Downtowns into materials.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
ED 6: Continue promoting Eden as a tourism destination and supporting efforts to improve its tourist attractions.	Continue to promote Eden as a recreational and historic tourism destination	Planning & Community Development Explore Eden	Ongoing
	Repair Historic Walking Tour signs	Planning Department	Short-term
	Continue to promote the Explore Eden brand statewide.	Community & Economic Development Explore Eden	Ongoing

Goal	Implementation Steps	Responsible Party	Time-Frame
GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS			
LU1: Encourage infill development where utility and transportation infrastructure exist.	Develop an infill incentive program to offset development fees or construction costs for projects meeting certain criteria in areas with existing infrastructure and services.	Planning & Community Development	Medium-term
	Consider offering a Building Improvement Incentive Grant for renovation of downtown buildings	Planning & Community Development	Medium-term
LU 3: Encourage a mix of housing types	Market the City of Eden to residential developers	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
	Encourage a mix of lot sizes and housing types in new developments. Review the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to identify barriers to housing variety.	Planning & Community Development	Medium-term
	Allow for pocket neighborhoods and small-scale multi-family housing in transition areas between downtown commercial areas and single-family neighborhoods.	Planning & Community Development	Medium-term
	Consider adjustments to regulations to encourage accessory dwelling units (ADUs).	Planning & Community Development	Medium-term
LU 6: Enforce City ordinances	Continue to provide funding for City's affirmative maintenance efforts, such as the removal of junk cars and litter from properties.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
NR 9: Encourage the protection of open space in new development.	Continue to require a minimum amount of open space in most new larger-scale residential developments. Require a percentage to be usable open space and natural open space.	Planning & Community Development	Medium-term
	Encourage the use of native trees in required landscaping and the preservation of mature trees.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
	Regularly update list of preferred species for use in required landscaping.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing

Goal	Implementation Steps	Responsible Party	Time-Frame
SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWNS			
LU 12: Encourage building maintenance and active uses in historic downtowns.	Enforce safety issues for vacant and/or deteriorating buildings, especially in historic downtowns.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
	Maintain a vacant properties inventory.	Planning & Community Development	Short-term update, then ongoing
	Enforce vacant commercial property registration requirement in the Unified Development Ordinance, monitor its effectiveness and consider updates as needed to protect property values and neighborhood character while enhancing the pedestrian experience.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing, Medium-term
LU 8: Create Small Area Plans for all of Eden's historic Downtowns	Execute small area plans for all of Eden's historic Downtowns	Planning & Community Development	Short-term
LU 9: Support the small businesses that make up the heart of the historic downtowns	Evaluate potential barriers to businesses including signage and parking regulations.	Planning & Community Development	Short-term
	Coordinate regularly with merchants' associations, businesses, and landowners on upcoming events and/or priority improvements.	Community & Economic Development	Ongoing
CULTURE AND RECREATION			
NR 2: Enhance neighborhood parks.	Program and fund Freedom Park improvements	Parks & Recreation	Medium-term
	Continue support and funding for youth recreation leagues.	Parks & Recreation	Ongoing
	Examine options for expanding skills-based programmed activities for youth and enhancements to senior programming.	Parks & Recreation	Short-term
	Continue plans for installing pickleball courts at Morgan Road Park and Bridge Street Recreation Center.	Parks & Recreation	Short-term
NR 4: Improve signage and expand promotional activities related to parks.	Develop a park facility and recreational program guide to help increase community awareness of facilities.	Parks & Recreation	Short-term
	Enhance or replace signage for existing parks and major facilities within parks.	Parks & Recreation	Medium-term
NR 6: Maintain, upgrade, and expand Eden's greenway system.	Invest in additional amenities such as benches, mile markers, and educational signage at trailheads and along greenways.	Parks & Recreation	Medium-term
	Introduce lighting at key locations.	Parks & Recreation	Long-term
	Connect greenways to neighborhoods and destinations with targeted pedestrian network improvements.	Planning & Community Development	Long-term

Goal	Implementation Steps	Responsible Party	Time-Frame
NR 5: Improve connection to rivers and river safety.	Connect Uptown Eden to Dan River	Planning & Community Development Parks & Recreation	Long-term
	Support recreation, river access, and greenway improvements as investments in Eden’s quality of life to attract employers.	Planning & Community Development Parks & Recreation	Medium-term
	Conduct a feasibility study of improvements to the west bank of the Smith River in the vicinity of Spray to determine if there are possibilities to improve access to the river. Include study of preservation and reuse of the trestle over the Smith River.	Planning & Community Development Parks & Recreation	Long-term
	Create a citywide effort to increase community awareness of and interaction with rivers.	Planning & Community Development Parks & Recreation	Short-term, Ongoing
	Introduce wayfinding, signage, and emergency kayak pull over areas along the Smith and Dan Rivers.	Parks & Recreation	Medium-term
CITY SERVICES AND AMENITIES			
INF 1: Continue to be proactive about water and sewer infrastructure needs.	Develop a Water & Sewer Master Plan every five years to address ongoing needs.	Public Works	Every 5 years
	Continue the Sewer Find & Fix It Program. Allocate at minimum \$50,000 per year for this program to reduce infiltration and inflow within the collection system.	Public Works	Ongoing
TR 3: Partner with NCDOT and Rockingham County on regional roadway improvements.	Coordinate with NCDOT on the Kings Hwy intersection improvement project to determine final design and future opportunities for beautification and potentially even redevelopment of unused right of way.	Public Works	Ongoing
NR 8: Conserve natural resources and protect water quality.	Continue to require preservation of stream buffers in new development.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
	Require adequate storm drainage for new development and practices that direct stormwater away from surface waters and incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize water quality impacts.	Planning & Community Development	Ongoing
	Study incentives for green stormwater infrastructure (i.e. rain gardens, bioretention areas, stormwater planters and other features that increase infiltration) in new development.	Planning & Community Development	Long-term

Goal	Implementation Steps	Responsible Party	Time-Frame
INF 2: Continue to demonstrate a commitment to clean water and storm/flood resiliency.	Continue to monitor and regularly clear the Dan River water intake to ensure that sedimentation does not impair water supply allocation or distribution.	Public Works	Ongoing
	Conduct a peracetic acid disinfection pilot study for either the Water Plant or Wastewater Treatment Plant (or both).	Public Works	Medium-term
	Use and maintain the City's truck-mounted meter data collection kits.	Public Works	Ongoing
	Pursue federal funding for major waterline replacement projects.	Public Works	Ongoing
	Determine cost effective ways to lower ISO rating.	Fire	Long-term
INF 3: Maintain a safe community for all.	Develop and maintain a 5-year replacement plan for major emergency services equipment.	Police, Fire	Ongoing
	Identify and maintain an appropriate ratio of police officers to residents.	Police	Ongoing
	Ensure adequate access to greenways for emergency services and vehicles.	Fire, Police, Parks & Recreation	Ongoing
	Address and map greenways and access points.	Planning & Community Development	Short-term
INF 5: Balance solid waste fees and collections.	Make a determination about short-term and long-term fee increases or changes in service to bring balance to the County's fund and the City's budget for processing solid waste.	Public Works	Medium-term
	Conduct a solid waste study to evaluate where the City could reasonably cut costs and find appropriate savings, as well as consideration of fair methodology to more accurately charge customers based on overall quantity, without diminishing level of service.	Public Works	Medium-term
TR 6: Expand transit strategically	Evaluate new bus stops annually.		
	Establish a minimum standard of accessibility design at all of Eden's SKAT bus stops.	SKAT Transit, Planning & Community Development	Short-term, Medium-term
CIVIC PRIDE			
TR 1: Invest in streetscape and parking upgrades in the central business areas.	Continue to enhance the commercial centers in Eden by identifying and implementing small win projects (plantings, lighting, street furniture, parks improvements, bulb-outs, shade trees, etc).	Planning & Community Development, Public Works	Ongoing
	Acquire land for public parking, either through purchasing areas or making lease agreements with property owners.	Planning & Community Development	Long-term

Goal	Implementation Steps	Responsible Party	Time-Frame
<p>TR 2: Fund and schedule roadway maintenance.</p>	<p>Conduct a pavement condition survey every five to ten years to accurately identify the right pavement preservation, maintenance, and repair strategy for each City-maintained roadway segment.</p> <p>Adequately fund road maintenance on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Public Works</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>ED 6: Continue promoting Eden as a tourism destination and supporting efforts to improve its tourist attractions.</p>	<p>Continue and expand local events calendar. Focus on adding events that draw visitors on a regional scale, such as Riverfest. Aim for one more large annual event added in the next 5 years.</p>	<p>City staff, Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



THE MINDSET IS THE ONLY CHANGE THAT MATTERS
DARRIN WRIGHT
@WRIGHTFORSHERIFF.ORG

BMX SHOW
7:00
2:00
4:00
MORNING
MORNING

UPTOWN EDEN
.....
SMALL AREA
PLAN

Introduction and Analysis

Introduction

The Uptown Eden Small Area Plan (SAP) is the result of a focused study that was conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan update project. It is the first of a series of small area plans the City anticipates for its historical downtowns. Uptown Eden is currently seeing a resurgence of investment, small business activity, and redevelopment that makes it a prime candidate for planning. The Small Area Plan will help define the goals for Uptown Eden (also known as Downtown Leaksville) so that all stakeholders are working towards the same objectives.

Process

The process of analyzing this area and creating this SAP largely followed the same process as the Comprehensive Plan. The project team analyzed the area using mapping and demographic data, and listened to local residents and business owners through questions on a survey, stakeholder meetings, an Uptown Merchants' Association meeting, and site visits to create this set of tailored strategic recommendations for Uptown.

Issues and Opportunities

Through this analysis and interview process, the project team identified a number of issues to address with this SAP. These included sidewalk condition and width, a need for more public parking near businesses, limited public restrooms, limited public open space (parks, outdoor dining, etc), and a lack of greenery and lighting around Uptown.

This Small Area Plan comes at an advantageous time. There is increasing business activity in the study area, new residential development being built, an increasing number of public events like Riverfest, and new City and state-led streetscape improvement projects planned (see "Planned Improvements" on page 52 for more.)



▶ The project team attended an Uptown Merchants Meeting in June 2021 to get a firsthand perspective on the existing conditions of Uptown.

Survey says...

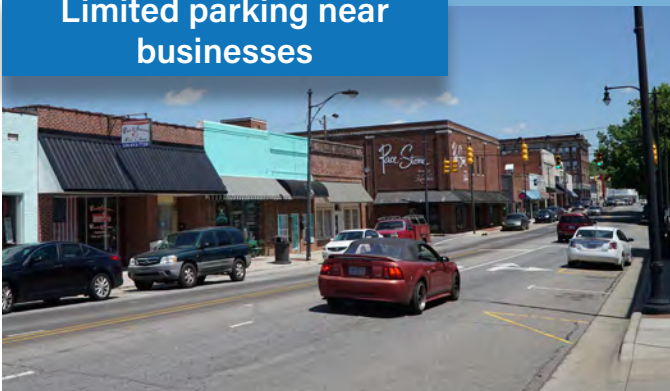


Issues

Lack of greenery and pedestrian lighting



Limited parking near businesses



Gaps in sidewalk network



Damaged, narrow sidewalks



Opportunities

Public Events



New Businesses



New Residential Units

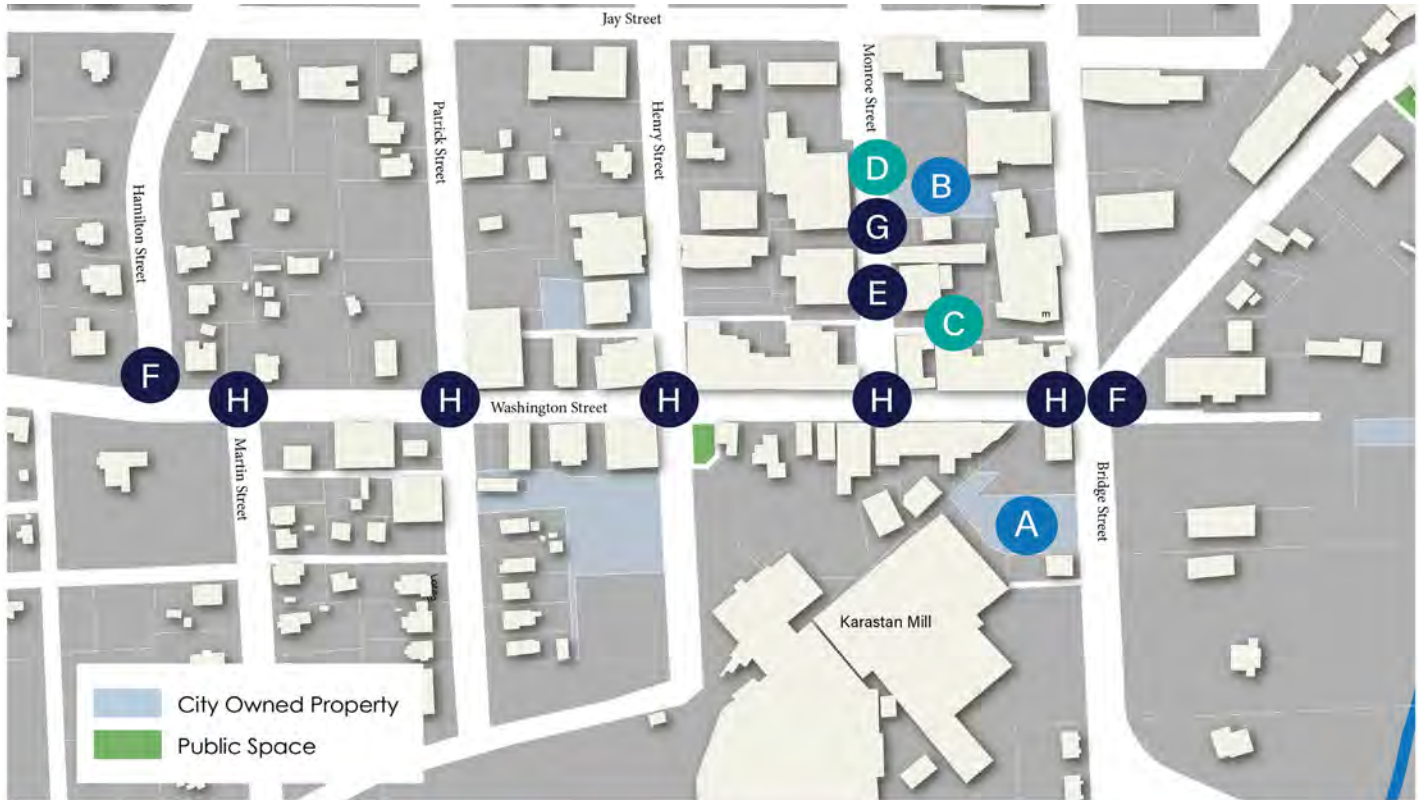


Planned Improvements



PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The Uptown Small Area Plan builds on the current momentum of improvement in the area. Many improvement projects are already planned, including upgrades to parking, infrastructure, and the streetscape. These projects are at different stages of the funding, approval, and construction process.



Parking

- A** Bridge Street Parking Lot - Wall and Tree Removal
- B** Monroe Street Parking Lot Resurfacing and Drainage Improvements

Paving/Utility

- C** Alley Behind Ray Commons Building
- D** Monroe Street Resurfacing

Streetscape

- E** Hotel/Ray Commons sidewalk
- F** Washington Street Crosswalks at Hamilton and Bridge Streets
- G** Monroe Street sidewalk maintenance
- H** Washington Street pedestrian signals between Bridge Street and Patrick Street

Source: City of Eden Planned Projects as of October 2021.

Note: funding sources and timeline for projects subject to change.

Analysis

Existing Land Use

Uptown Eden has been a historical business center for the City and region. Commercial uses are concentrated along Bridge, Washington and Monroe Street. Henry Street also has some commercial land uses. The former Karastan Mill property occupies a large portion of the study area, anchoring the Southern end of Uptown between the commercial area and the Dan River. Away from the commercial and industrial center of Uptown, land use transitions to residential, typically single-family homes on smaller lots.

Business Activity and Events

Small, local businesses are the heart of Uptown. The area has seen an increase in business investment in the past few years. More activity is on the horizon, with investors taking advantage of the affordable older building stock found in Uptown. The project team conducted a market leakage analysis on the study area,

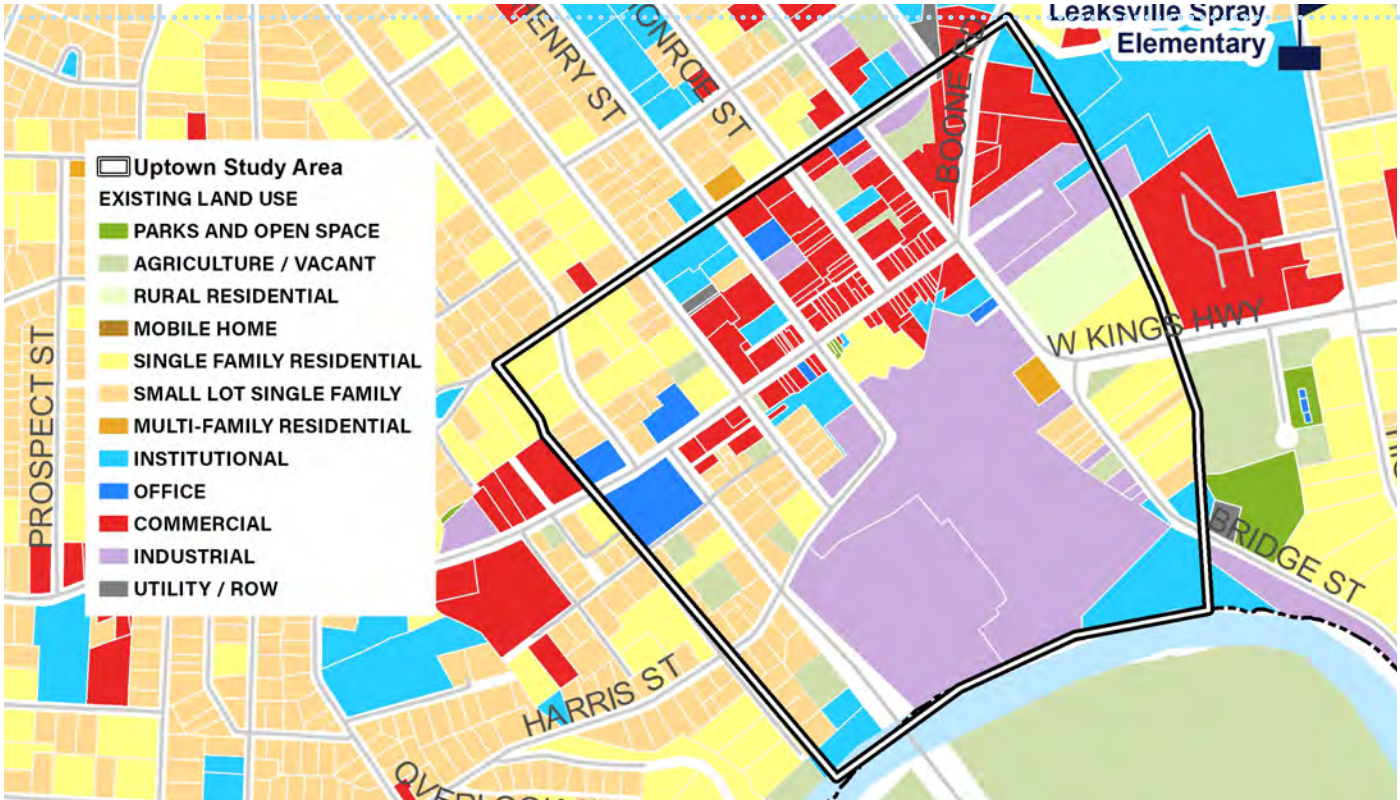
finding that there is a demand for more restaurants and bars in Uptown. This correlates with observations heard during stakeholder engagement from the Uptown Merchants. At the time of writing this Plan, several eateries are expected to open up in the next year, which will address that market gap.

Riverfest and similar events help activate Uptown, drawing visitors and bringing in revenue for businesses. Events like this are a key component of creating an identity for Uptown and help bring in new customers who may return outside of event days.

Residential

As mentioned, residential uses in the study area surround the commercial center and are primarily older single-family homes on smaller lots. The average parcel size for a single-family homes in the study area is 0.33 acres. There are a few multifamily structures in the study area, with more on the way. New apartment and townhome units are being developed within the study area, and according to stakeholder

EXISTING LAND USE



Source: Rockingham County Tax Data 2019

interviews, are in extremely high demand. Introducing new housing types such as these provides a built-in customer base for Uptown businesses and helps activate the area.

Infrastructure and Transportation

With increased visitors to Uptown in recent years, parking has become more of an issue. This was voiced by the community several times during the development of this plan. Stakeholders, the community survey, and the Uptown Merchants Association echoed the public desire for parking solutions in Uptown. The City is exploring methods for expanding options for public off-street parking. Recommendations to manage existing and future on-street parking is addressed in the recommendations section of this document.

Improvements to the streetscape and sidewalks are largely dependent on who owns and operates the roads. The Planned Improvements map on the previous page shows City of Eden and NCDOT projects. Any improvements on Washington Street, being a State road, will likely be through NCDOT.

Monroe Street, one of the key streets in Uptown, is a City maintained road that recently underwent a traffic study. Monroe Street was the subject of a traffic study in 2021 which determined that it could potentially be converted to a one-way street. This option would allow for additional parking, patio dining, and landscaping enhancements on the street. Alternative improvements are also under consideration including the restriping of parallel parking to angled parking on the east side of the street and/or the addition of curb extensions at intersections and a mid-block crossing to make conditions safer for pedestrians.

Pedestrian Realm

Uptown's streets are mostly laid out in a pedestrian-friendly grid. Small block sides, short building frontages, and active facades encourage walking. There are sidewalks along most of the roads within the study area, though sidewalk condition and width varies greatly throughout the area. There are also some gaps in sidewalks that prevent complete connectivity within the study area.

Sidewalk connections to and from the commercial center of Uptown to the residential areas and Dan River can be improved. A Pedestrian Plan is currently underway that identifies several opportunities to better connect Uptown to adjacent neighborhoods and to the Dan River Trail.

During stakeholder interviews and the Uptown Merchants Meeting, users expressed a desire for more landscaping and lighting within Uptown. Landscaping and greenery would provide an aesthetic upgrade in addition to supplying shade to pedestrians in warmer weather. Lighting, particularly in public off-street parking areas, would help increase safety, encourage the uses of these lots, and encourage users to stay in Uptown into the evening.

Public Space

Public spaces such as parks are limited in Uptown. Harrington Park at the corner of Henry Street and Washington Street is a 0.1 acre site at the area's main intersection and provides benches and shade for users. The city also owns several lots in the study area, but does not have plans to convert them to parks. Leaksville Landing is a public park and river access just south of Uptown Eden. A connection to this area could help offset the lack of open space by better connecting Uptown to Eden's natural resources.

Recommendations

These recommendations for Uptown are based on the analysis and stakeholder input. The goals of the Comprehensive Plan are applicable to Uptown.

Small Area Plan Goals

- Create connections into and within Uptown.**
- Foster a diverse business community.**
- Define land use policies to guide future infill and redevelopment.**
- Make Uptown a destination by beautifying and enhancing the public realm and identifying key infrastructure investments.**

Major Recommendations

- Continue planned improvements including infrastructure and parking.
- Monroe Street improvements – Consider street improvements to increase parking and pedestrian safety.
- Evaluate options for shelter and restrooms on Monroe Street on vacant lot north of Post Office.
- Henry Street Parking Expansion - Coordinate with landowner to evaluate feasibility of an expansion of the Henry Street parking lot.

Programming and Public Space

► Wayfinding

Create an identity and make Uptown Eden more accessible for new visitors through a wayfinding program.

- Additional signage should be added to clearly guide visitors to parking areas, commercial areas, and Leaksville Landing.
- An informational kiosk should be located near the intersection of Washington Street and Monroe Street.

Combine future wayfinding efforts with enhancements to the Historical Eden Walking Tour.

- Add information regarding the Walking Tour on a future informational kiosk.
- Update Walking Tour web pages and fix the corresponding QR codes on the street plaques.

► Parking

Short Term: Complete planned parking improvement projects,

such as the Bridge Street parking lot improvements and the Monroe Street parking lot improvements.

Long-term: The City should also consider studying the potential expansion of the Henry Street parking lot.

► Lighting

Increase lighting in Uptown to promote safety, particularly leading to and within public parking areas.

Consider converting streetlamps to pedestrian-oriented decorative lampposts on Monroe Street.

► Public Spaces

Enhance public spaces throughout Uptown Eden.

- Increase sidewalk width where possible (consider widening sidewalks and/or the addition of bulb-outs at intersections)
- Introduce new public space types such as opportunities for patio dining.

► **Events**

Continue existing programming and events such as Oink & Ale, Rock the Block, and RiverFest.

Add one annual event similar to Riverfest within the next three years.

Consider additional events such as 5K runs, First Fridays, free exercise classes, etc.

► **Public Restrooms and Entertainment Space**

Provide space for outdoor entertainment in tandem with future Monroe Street improvements.

Locate public restrooms in Uptown Eden. Find options to co-locate restrooms in a larger project, such as part of a private redevelopment project, a pocket park with a stage or within a public parking lot project.

► **Central Gathering Space**

Explore site and partnership options for creating a central gathering space in Uptown Eden that could be utilized for a farmers market or other such events.

► **Uptown Gateway**

Consider adding an entry feature to Uptown Eden on Bridge Street.

- Update signage and landscaping along Bridge Street south of Washington Street.
- Explore potential additional parking along Bridge Street.

► **Support Local Businesses**

Coordinate regularly with the Uptown Merchants' Association and property owners to track progress on recommendations in the Uptown Eden Small Area Plan.

Create an annual "Uptown Report" to track public and private



► Harrington Park in Downtown Leaksville / Uptown Eden is named after Jean Dunn Harrington who was a long-time advocate for historic preservation and downtown development in Eden.

investment and recent successes and challenges in the area.

► **Enhance Dan River Connections**

Study ways to increase pedestrian connections from Uptown Eden to the Dan River.

- The Dan River Trail exists between Leaksville Landing and Clearwater Park. If this was linked to Uptown it could create a walking loop from Uptown Eden to and through natural spaces along the river.
- Currently South Hamilton Street has a sidewalk on the east side of the roadway south to Harris Street. There is no sidewalk from Harris Street to Leaksville Landing.
- Complete sidewalks on Bridge Street south of Kings Highway.
- Once a sidewalk connection is made, advertise the River connection on future signage in Uptown Eden.

Improve public spaces along the Dan River.

- Consider enhancements to Leaksville Landing and Clearwater Park including parking improvements, picnic tables and signage.

GATHERING SPACE AND PARKING OPTIONS FOR UPTOWN

Expanding public parking and gathering spaces in Uptown can be done using short-term, smaller scale, or longer-term, larger scale moves, depending on budget and coordination with land owners. A few options for short- and long-term solutions that add parking and improve the area's gathering and entertainment spaces are described below.

Short-Term Intervention: Stage and Shelter on Monroe Street



Left: Stage and Public Restrooms in Marion. Right: Farmers Market in Knightdale.

Introducing upgrades such as a covered area and restrooms on Monroe Street is a short-term way to increase entertainment space and add restrooms. The vacant lot north of the Post Office is a candidate location.

Long-Term Option: Henry Street Parking Lot Concept



Site Elements

- ① Restroom & water station
- ② Additional event parking/plaza space
- ③ Green lawn/seating area
- ④ Multi-use stage and event structure
- ⑤ Adjusted parking spaces
- ⑥ Trash & recycling area
- ⑦ Updated entry paving band

As a larger, longer-term solution, the City could coordinate with landowners to determine if there is an opportunity for a purchase or lease of the existing parking lot off of Henry and Harris Street. This conceptual diagram shows how strategic design can upgrade existing parcels in Uptown to meet several goals. It takes a portion of the Karastan parking lot and re-imagines it as a central gathering space for Uptown with a stage, covered structure for a farmers market and other events, restrooms, and increasing public parking. Surrounding the stage is a grass area for seating or other use. The permeable paved plaza area accommodates a multi-use structure for bathrooms and water station. The plaza could also be used for additional vehicle parking or food trucks during an event.

Land Use

► Infill and Redevelopment

Encourage adaptive reuse of the existing building stock.

Encourage context-sensitive infill and redevelopment, including a variety of residential and commercial types.

Encourage building design that utilizes architectural materials and details that are in keeping with the character of the area.

Utilize narrow building footprints and other techniques to accommodate the change in grade along many streets.

► Active Uses

Encourage active ground-floor uses for new development along major frontages in the Commercial Core shown in the Uptown Land Use Concept (next page).

Encourage transparency and/or windows and balconies on building facades to support active commercial streets.

► Mixed-Use

Promote projects that vertically mix uses, including new buildings with commercial on the ground floor and office or residential above.

► Residential

Increase and diversify housing options within Uptown. Encourage residential-over-commercial, townhomes, and pocket neighborhoods.

► Neighborhood Transitions

Use small-scale multifamily units such as pocket neighborhoods and townhomes to transition from Uptown's commercial core to the surrounding historic neighborhoods.

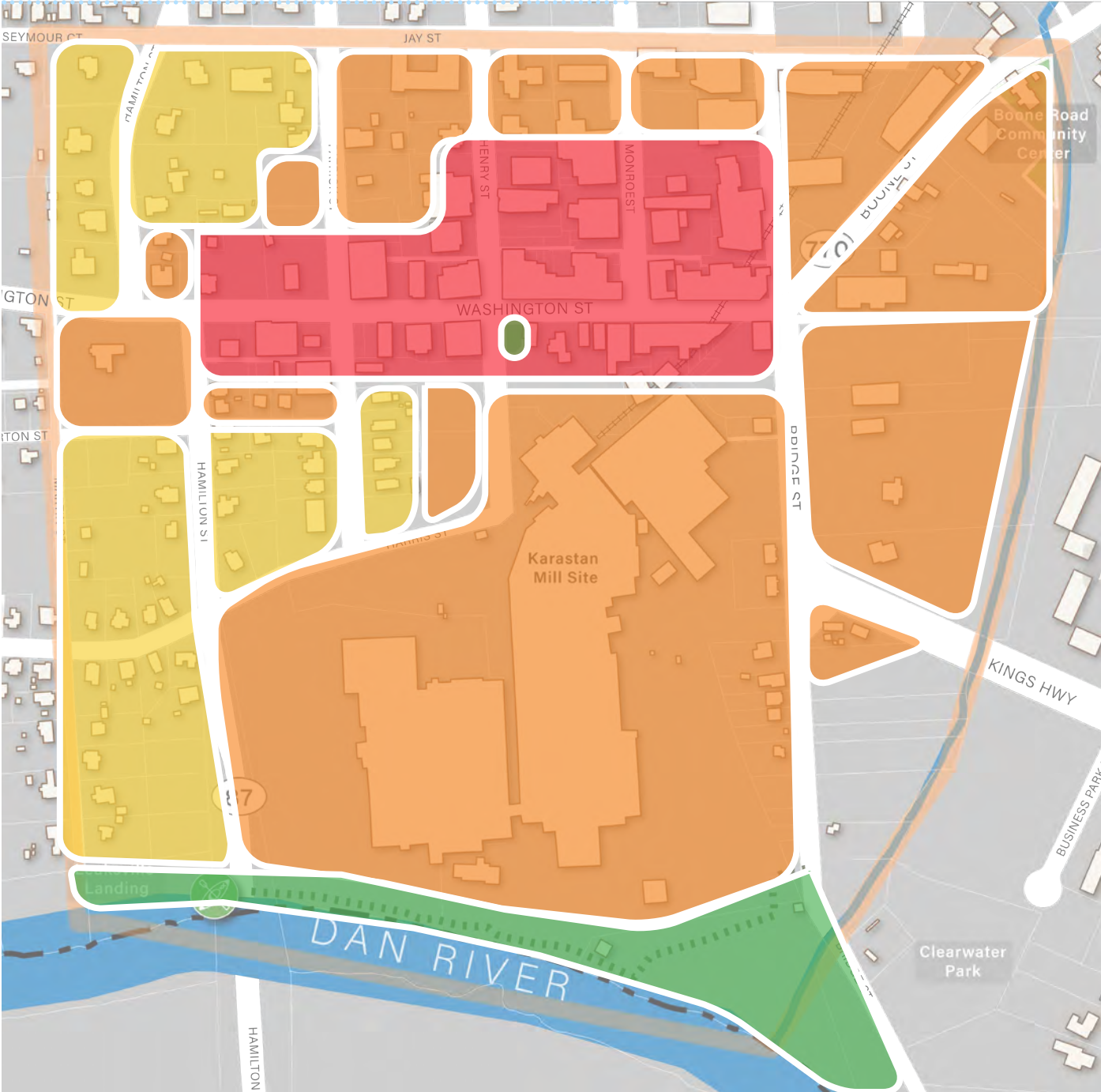


► New development in the Commercial Core of Uptown Eden should be 2-4 stories with active ground floors and parking located in the rear.



► Pocket neighborhoods are clustered groups of homes oriented around a shared open space (i.e. a courtyard, common green, garden, pedestrian way or reclaimed alley).

UPTOWN LAND USE CONCEPT



Commercial Core - Commercial focus with active ground floor uses. Upper stories are a mix of office and residential uses. New buildings are located close to the street, at least two stories high, and parking is located in the rear.

Residential / Traditional Neighborhood - Existing residential areas surrounding Uptown Edén. When redevelopment occurs, new single family homes, pocket neighborhoods, and smaller-scale multi-family units (i.e. duplexes, triplexes) are encouraged.

Mixed Use - A mix of residential and nonresidential uses. Includes larger scale commercial and multifamily residential. No requirement for active ground floor uses. Building footprints can be larger. Less active uses help transition away from the commercial core to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Greenway / Park - Parks and public spaces including Harrington Park and the Dan River Trail.

Transportation and Infrastructure

► Pedestrian Improvements

Support Planned improvements at pedestrian crossings.

- NCDOT and the City are planning to refresh cross-walks and add pedestrian actuated signals along Washington Street.

► Consolidate signage and infrastructure where possible

- Consolidate signage, pedestrian crossing signal poles, and utility poles where feasible.

► Sidewalks

Increase ADA compliance by widening sidewalks and eliminating freestanding posts where feasible.

Address sidewalk gaps as identified in the Eden Pedestrian Plan.

► Implement the Pedestrian Plan:

Implement identified projects from the Eden Pedestrian Plan, including

- Intersection improvements at Washington Street and Hamilton Street and at Harris Street and Hamilton Street.
- Extend sidewalk from South Hamilton Street (Harris Street to Leaksville Landing.)
- Fill sidewalk gaps and rehabilitate sidewalks along Monroe Street and Henry Street north of Jay Street.

► Monroe Street Conversation

Consider improvements to Monroe Street to improve pedestrian safety and increase on-street parking.

- Implement minor improvements after street resurfacing and sidewalk rehabilitation that is scheduled for 2022.
- Study alternative improvements that would better address parking needs and pedestrian safety.
 - *Coordinate with the fire department to determine ways to ensure adequate fire access along Monroe Street.*
 - *See potential alternatives that were studied as part of this plan on P. 62.*

► Manage Parking

Continue to discourage employee parking in on-street spaces.

Consider parking restrictions for a subset of high-demand on-street spaces during business hours.

► Washington and Bridge Street Intersection

Study potential upgrades to the intersection of Washington Street and Bridge Street.

- Improvements could include a roundabout, improved access management, pedestrian facilities and/or an entryway feature.

► Trash and Recycling

Coordinate with businesses and building owners to identify opportunities for shared waste containers and/or cardboard recycling.

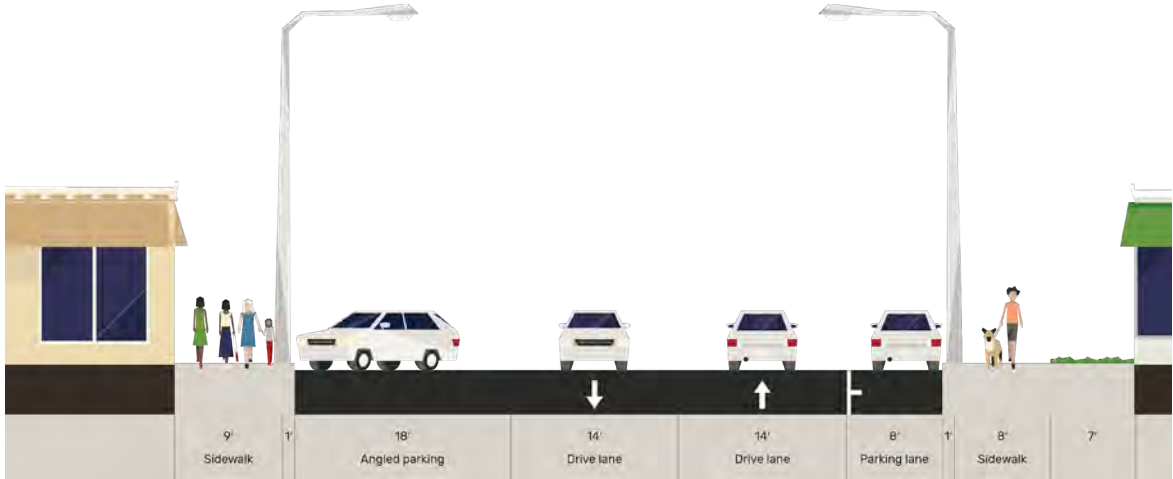
Monroe Street Concepts

Monroe Street was a focus area of the small area plan. The street is currently experiencing a wave of development - both retail and residential. The street has a wide right-of-way and sidewalks in need of repair. Stakeholder interviews and meetings with the Uptown Eden Merchants Association indicated that there is a need for additional on-street parking spaces and support for enhanced landscaping and plantings along Monroe Street.

Monroe Street Stats
 ROW Width: 80 ft
 Pavement Width: 54-55ft
 Travel Lane Width: 28-30ft
 Current Parking: 56 Spaces

Existing Conditions

Monroe Street is currently wide, automobile-dominated, and lacking greenery or plantings. There are marked pedestrian crossings at the main intersections and mid-block. Sidewalks are narrow and do not leave space for street furnishings or plantings. Overhead power lines double as lampposts for cobra head style street lights. The existing street cross-section has angled parking on the west side and parallel parking on the east side. Two wide vehicle through-lanes and parking devote most of the right of way to vehicles. Current width of vehicle lanes are 14-15ft. Studies have shown that wide vehicle lanes lead to increased vehicle speeds and reduce safety for pedestrians.



Existing Monroe Street Cross Section



Looking West at the midway point of the block. Pedestrians often jaywalk here to get to their destinations or vehicles.



Looking North toward Jay Street

Potential Improvements to Monroe Street

Short-term improvements to Monroe Street are planned, including resurfacing and sidewalk replacement. Based on input received it is recommended to study additional improvements including curb extensions (also known as "bump-outs") at the intersection of Jay Street and Washington Street and improvements to the mid-block pedestrian crosswalk. The addition of landscaping or plantings and pedestrian lighting would also be beneficial. Long-term improvements could be studied further as the width of the right-of-way and pavement present an opportunity to better address the need for additional parking and pedestrian safety concerns. Inspiration for future Monroe Street improvements are included in the pictures below.

Inspiration

Hendersonville, NC offers a picturesque streetscape with mid-block crossings and outdoor dining.



Source: Stewart

Curb bulb-outs are an easy project that increase safety for downtown crossings.



Source: AARP

Elevated parklets with seating are a smart interim option before street conversion can occur.



Source: Town of Bloomsburg

Alternatives

Traffic studies indicate that the street could be reconfigured to allow for an improved pedestrian environment, either in a one-way or two-way-format. The concepts on the following pages show both one and two-way options for the street, additional on-street parking, landscaping, and/or flexible areas that could be used for outdoor dining or other uses. All of the options increase on-street parking from its existing 56 spaces. It is estimated that 12-15 additional on-street parking spaces are possible with conversion to a one-way traffic pattern. Narrower lanes and plantings would also increase pedestrian safety.



The cross-section above shows one potential alternative to Monroe Street. This concept and additional alternatives are shown and described on the following pages.

Concept 1 - One-Way Northbound with Enhanced Landscaping

Note the alternatives shown are conceptual and additional design and input would be needed to determine final design.

Access Maintained
Street improvements are possible while maintaining access for driveways

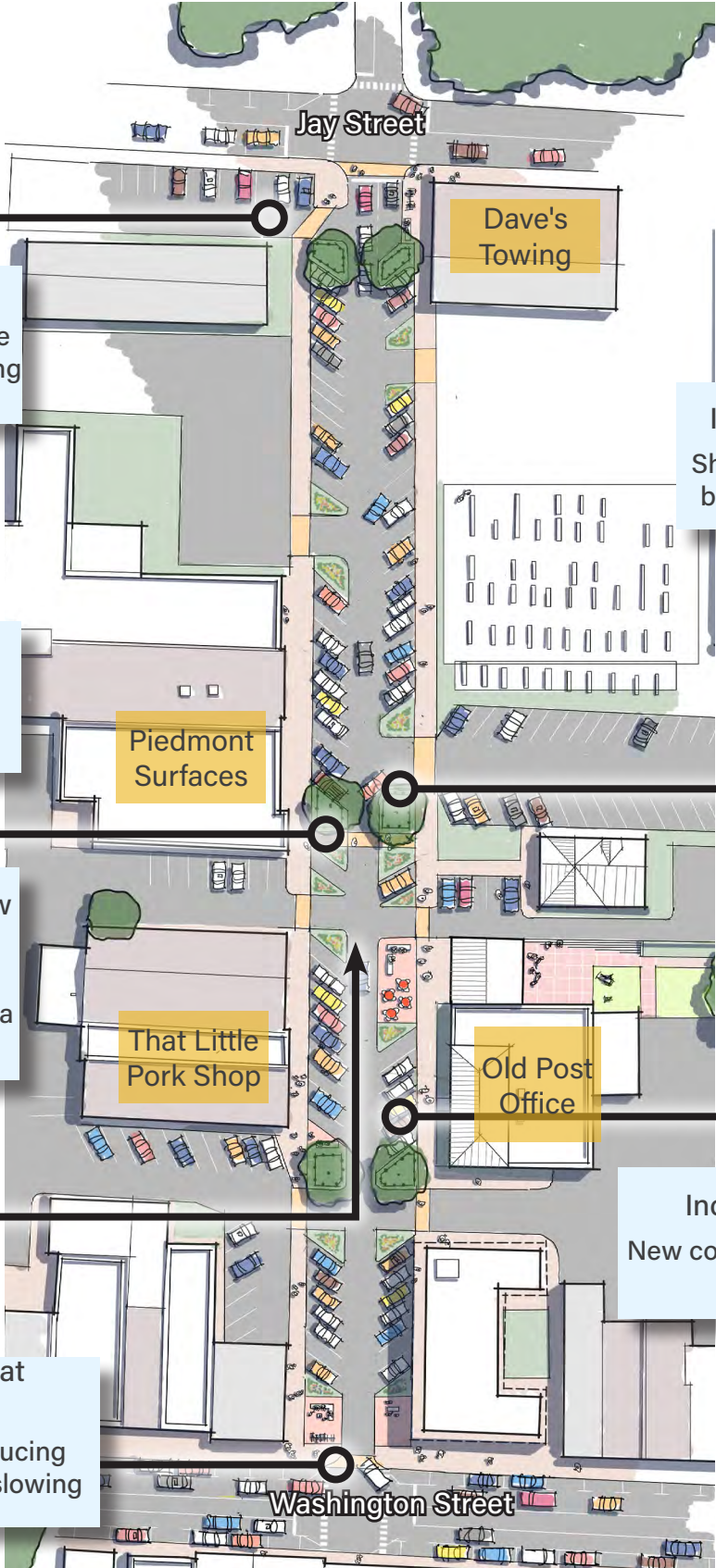
Mid-block crossing
Safely cross with new markings where it is convenient

Northbound traffic flow
Studies show one-way traffic is feasible for Monroe Street, allowing a new cross-section

Curb Extensions at Intersections
Increase safety by reducing crossing distance and slowing down cars

Increased greenery
Shades pedestrians and buffers them from cars

Increased Parking
New configuration adds 12-15 parking spots



The street concept above shows one-way traffic with added parking and landscaping.

Concept 2

One-way north bound with patio dining

This concept identifies vehicle traffic moving northbound. The maximum number of parking is shown in this layout while providing ROW access from all adjacent properties.

This concept includes enhanced landscaping, angled parking and improved pedestrian crossings at Jay Street and Washington Street that reduces the crossing distance.



Concept 3

Two-Way with enhanced landscaping

This concept identifies vehicle traffic moving north and southbound. The maximum number of parking is shown in this layout while providing ROW access from all adjacent properties.

This concept includes enhanced landscaping and angled parking where feasible. Parking additions may be limited in this alternative due to turn lanes located on either end of the street.



Note the alternatives shown are conceptual and additional design and input would be needed to determine final design.





4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

An existing conditions assessment is an essential tool when creating a plan that responds to the needs of a community.

Thorough exploration of demographics, land use, economic conditions, and existing planning efforts has allowed this plan to better serve the City of Eden. Some key findings:

- » Eden is still experiencing a modest decline in population, but some indicators of reversal of this trend have been seen.
- » Demographics are shifting. The population is becoming slightly older and more diverse overall.
- » Housing in Eden remains more affordable than Rockingham County's average.
- » Eden has room to grow. Large parcels are still available around the City.

In addition to public input, findings from the existing conditions analysis were fundamental tools in the creation of the Plan's recommendations.

Demographics and Housing

Population Growth

Eden remains the most populous City in Rockingham County. Its population has remained relatively stable in the past few decades, despite experiencing slow population decline in more recent decades. However, recent estimates show a slight uptick in population from 2019-2020. As of the most recently available data, the study area has a population of 19,385 people, with 15,421 of those people living within the corporate limits.

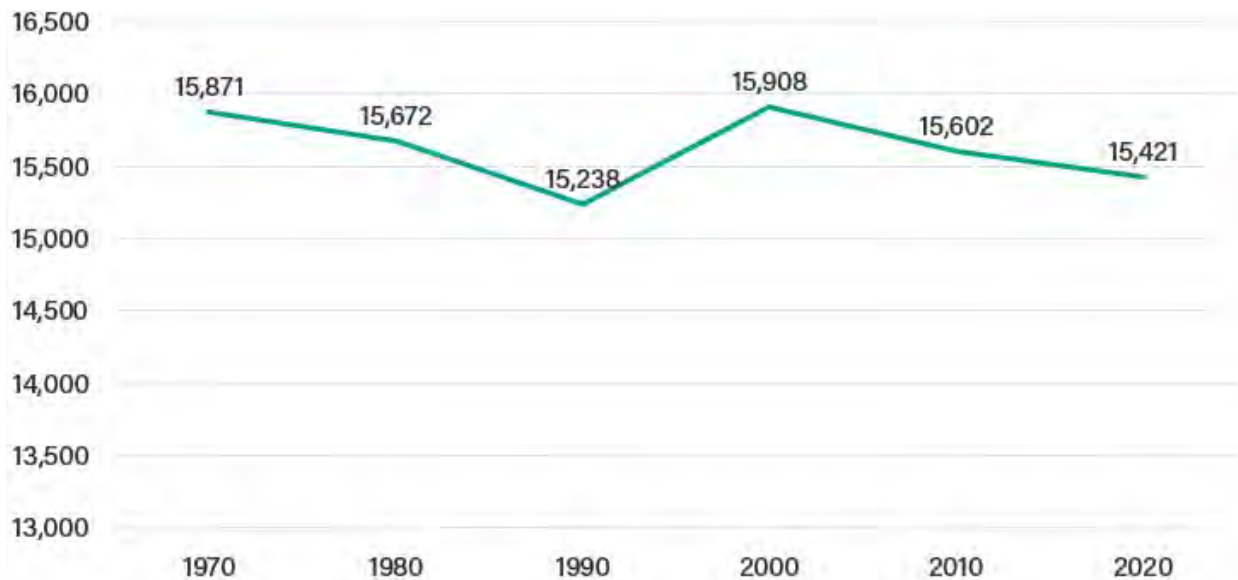
The North Carolina State demographer makes population projections for the next several decades. These projections are done on a county level, but are helpful information when planning for the future. Currently projections predict population decline in Rockingham County, but it does not specify where. Those projections also do not take into account recent local trends.

POPULATION ESTIMATES

	2000	2010	2020
Study Area	20,342	19,779	19,486
Corporate Limits	15,908	15,602	15,421
ETJ	4,434	4,177	4,065

Decennial Census, ESRI

HISTORIC POPULATION, MUNICIPAL LIMITS



Decennial Census

AT A GLANCE

Study Area 2020

19,385

Population



44.4

Median Age



10%

Adults over 25 with Bachelor's degrees



-2.4%

Pop. Change Since 2000

39%

Minority population*

\$87,500

Median Home Value*+

Rockingham County 2020

91,096

Population



44.7

Median Age+



3.4%

Adults over 25 with Bachelor's Degrees+



<0.5%

Pop. Change Since 2000

29.6%

Minority Population

\$112,800

Median Home Value+

Study Area 2018

5,948

Jobs*



0.38

Jobs/ resident*

22.6%

Unemployment+

MANUFACTURING

Largest employment Sector*

\$34,917

Median Household Income+



24.6

Mean commute time (minutes)*+

Rockingham County 2018

19,714

2018 Jobs



0.21

Jobs/ Resident

18.4%

Unemployment

MANUFACTURING

Largest employment Sector

\$43,579

Median Household Income+



26.4

Mean Commute Time (minutes)+

* - Corporate Limits
+ - 2019 figure

Statistics listed according to most recently available data from data sources. Sources: US Census, ESRI, American Community Survey.

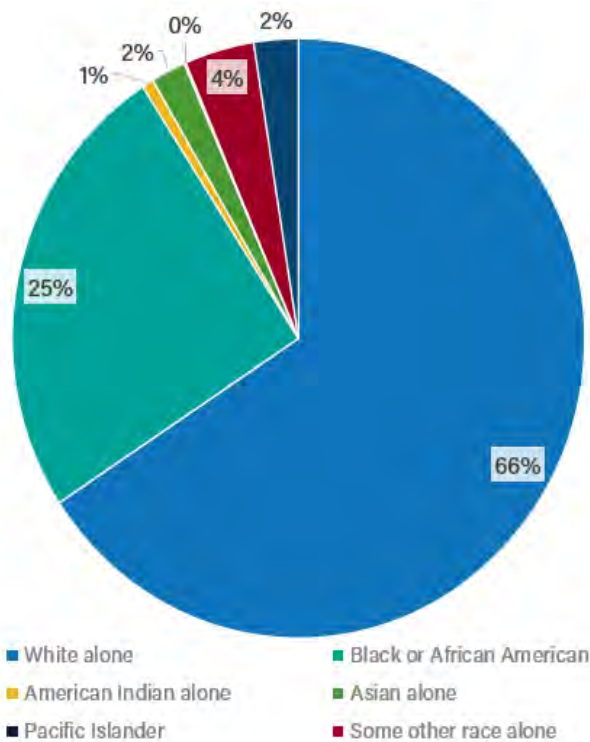
Racial Composition

As of 2019, the study area population was estimated to be 66% white, 25% black or African-American, and 9% other races. Since 2010, the population identifying as white alone has decreased, while other groups such as Asian alone and Indigenous Americans have increased. 7.5% of the study area population is estimated to be Hispanic.



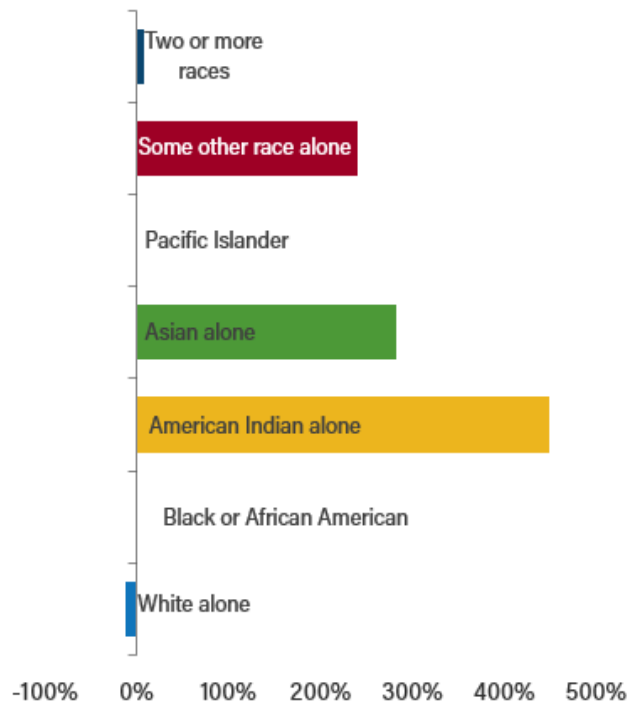
Eden's population has become more diverse since 2010.

RACIAL COMPOSITION 2019



ACS 5-year estimates, 2019

RACIAL COMPOSITION CHANGE 2010-2019



Shown by percent growth. ACS 5-year estimates, 2010, 2019

Age Composition

As of 2019, 22% of the study area’s population was 19 years old or younger, accounting for approximately 4,172 people. 48% is between 20 and 59 years, and approximately 29% is over age 60.

Changes in age cohorts indicate an aging population, which is also a trend echoed amongst stakeholders. The median age within city limits has increased from 38.8 in 2010 to 43.1 in 2019 (ACS 5-year Estimates.) The age groups that have decreased as percent of the total population since 2010 are those under 19 years old, and those between 30 and 59 years. These age groups could represent those within family age. Population between 20 and 29 and over 60 has increased since 2010.

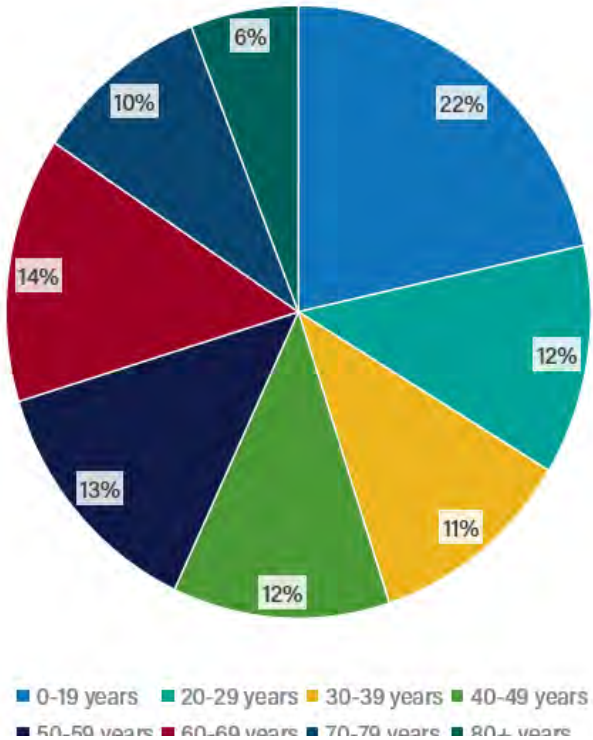
The age ranges correlated with families (children 0-19 and adults 30-59) declined between 2010 and 2019

MEDIAN AGE



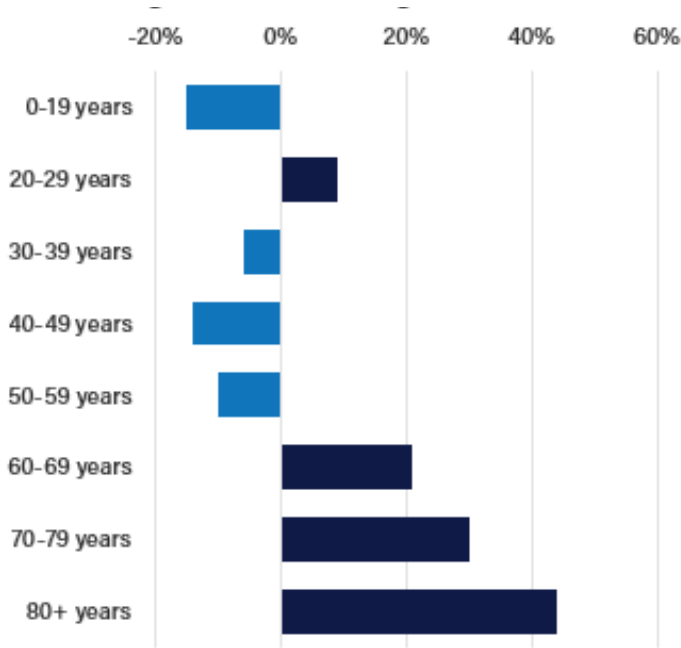
ACS 5-year estimates, 2010, 2019

AGE COMPOSITION 2019



ACS 5-year estimates, 2019

AGE COMPOSITION CHANGE 2010-2019



Shown by percent growth. ACS 5-year estimates, 2010, 2019

Housing

Pricing

Homes in Eden have historically had values lower than the county and state averages. This remains true, as housing prices have increased across the board in North Carolina. The average home in Eden cost \$87,500 in 2019, while the Rockingham County average was \$112,800.

Types

Eden’s housing stock is dominated by single-family homes, which account for about 74% of dwelling units in municipal limits. However, demand is growing for different types of housing. New developments in Uptown are bringing apartments and townhomes to the market, and those involved say their stock rents or sells before it is finished,

The City’s steady population rate and long history is reflected in the age of its housing stock. 42% of homes of all types were built before 1960, and only 7% of homes were built after 2000.

Reported Market Trends

During the stakeholder interviews in May 2021, those involved in real estate reported that the housing market was more competitive than they had ever experienced. The announcement of the Purina factory had contributed to the re-ignition of the market, and supply was not meeting demand, both in terms of quantity and type of homes. Realtors reported that homes were selling above asking prices and selling quickly.



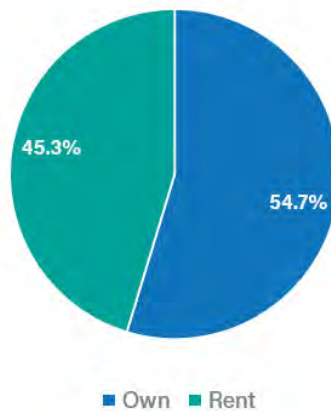
Two in every five homes were built before 1960.



Housing Units		
	2010	2019
Study Area	9784	9951
City Limits	7555	7942
ETJ	2229	2009

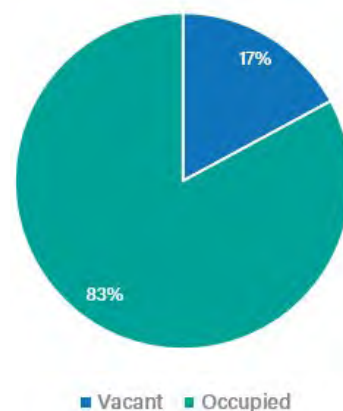
ACS 5-year estimates, ESRI

HOME OWNERSHIP



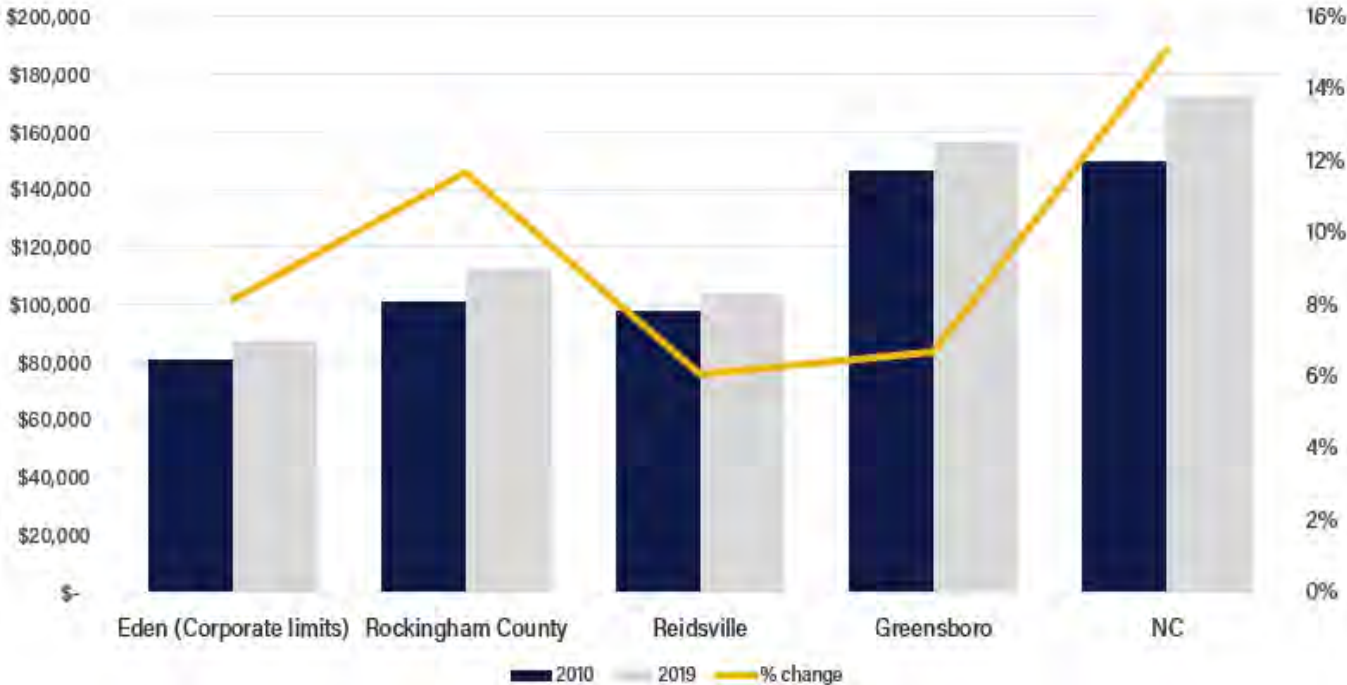
ACS 5-year estimates, 2019

VACANCY



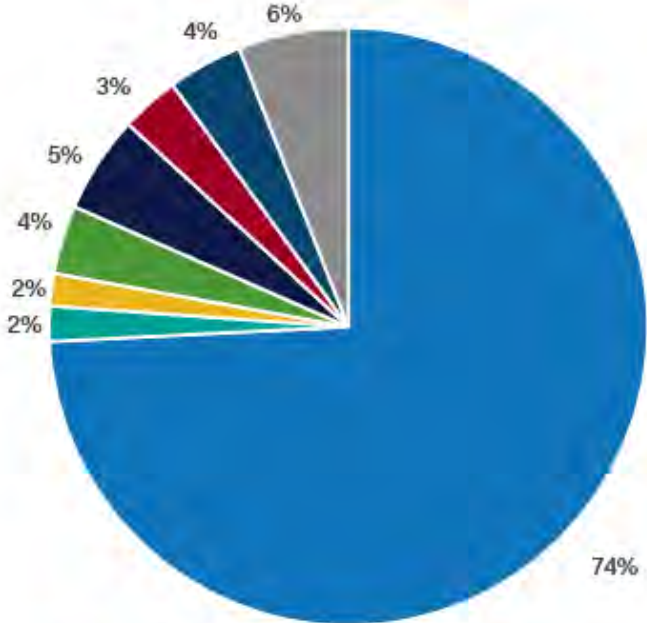
ACS 5-year estimates, 2019

MEDIAN HOME VALUE



Source: 2010 , 2019 ACS 5-year Estimates

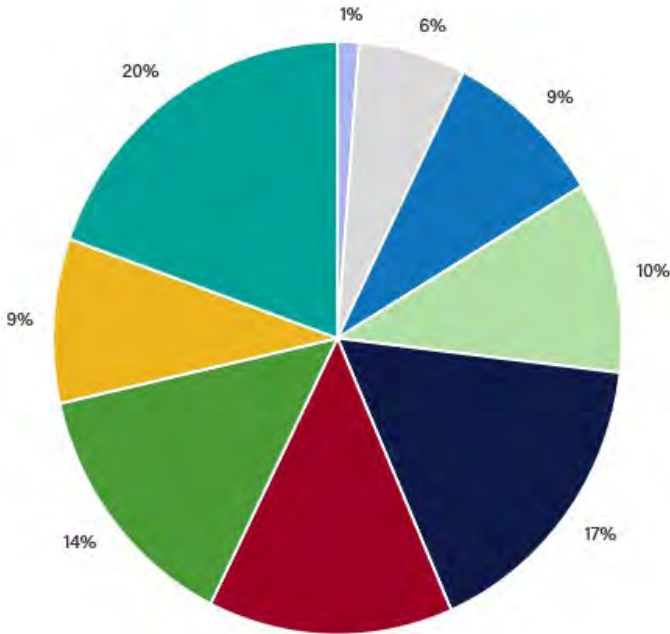
HOUSING BY TYPE 2019



- 1 unit - detached
- 20 or more units
- 3 or 4 units
- 5 to 9 units
- 10-19 units
- Townhome
- Mobile Home
- Duplex

ACS 5-year estimates, 2019

HOUSING YEAR BUILT



- 2010 to 2019
- 2000 to 2009
- 1990 to 1999
- 1980 to 1989
- 1970 to 1979
- 1960 to 1969
- 1950 to 1959
- 1940 to 1949
- 1939 or earlier

ACS 5-year estimates, 2019

Natural & Historical Resources

Natural Resources

Eden's early growth can be traced to its prime location at the junction of the Smith and Dan Rivers. Today, the rivers are important recreation and environmental assets.

Maintaining water quality, tree canopy, and a system of open spaces that provides recreational opportunities while protecting biodiversity is critical to quality of life, environmental health, and economic health.

Based on a review of the Biodiversity/Wildlife Habitat assessment conducted by the NCNHP, areas with the highest biodiversity are found directly adjacent to the Smith and Dan Rivers and their tributaries. These areas overlap with outdoor recreation along the Matrimony Creek Greenway, the Smith River Greenway, and near DeHart park. Designated NHP Natural areas which have particular habitat significance can be found in the Roundhouse Road Forest, the Fitzgerald Woodland, and the Leaksville Loam Forests. These areas are identified in the Natural Resources map on page 39.

Many rare and endangered species have been known to live in Rockingham County and could potentially occur in these areas within the study area, including several amphibians, the Roanoke Longperch, and the James spiny mussel.

The city's water supply is part of the Upper Dan River Watershed, which covers an area of roughly 2,075 square miles and drains into the

Dan River. Approximately 98% of the watershed is covered by forested or agricultural lands, though a 2020 Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Report indicated that the Dan River has a high inherent vulnerability and susceptibility for contamination from a range of potential contaminant sources (PCS) throughout the watershed, including underground gasoline storage tanks, permitted wastewater discharges and other waste disposal sites, urban storm water runoff, or other types of non-point source contamination.

The City also features many areas with steep, unbuildable slopes that help protect wildlife habitat. These are typically found along the banks of the rivers and their tributaries.

River Access

Today the rivers provide drinking water for the City of Eden and offer recreational opportunities including fishing, canoeing, and kayaking. The Smith River Greenway, Matrimony Creek Nature Trail, and Dan River Trail provide access to creeks and rivers while providing opportunities for biking, walking and jogging. The City has created the Island Ford Landing River Access Site, at the Smith River Greenway, and the Draper Landing River Access Site, at the east Highway 700 bridge to improve access to the rivers. The completion of these two projects makes three river access sites that have been developed and are maintained by the City.



“On the greenways, it would be nice to see the rivers.”

- Workshop attendee

Historical Resources

Eden is fortunate to have several of its Downtowns included in its 13 National Register Historic districts. These districts recognize areas with a high concentration of characteristic homes and storefronts that give windows into Eden’s history. Its largest National Register District is the Central Leaksville Historic District. Other districts include the Leaksville Commercial Historic District and the Spray Industrial Historic District. The Draper Commercial Historic District has been put on the Study List (see box at right).

There are also many contributing historic structures all over the City. These structures are located inside and outside the official Historic Districts. These include ten structures on the National Register list and dozens of structures that are eligible for listing and/or have been surveyed to be listed.

A district boundary that is displayed as “**study listed**” is likely to be eligible for the National Register.

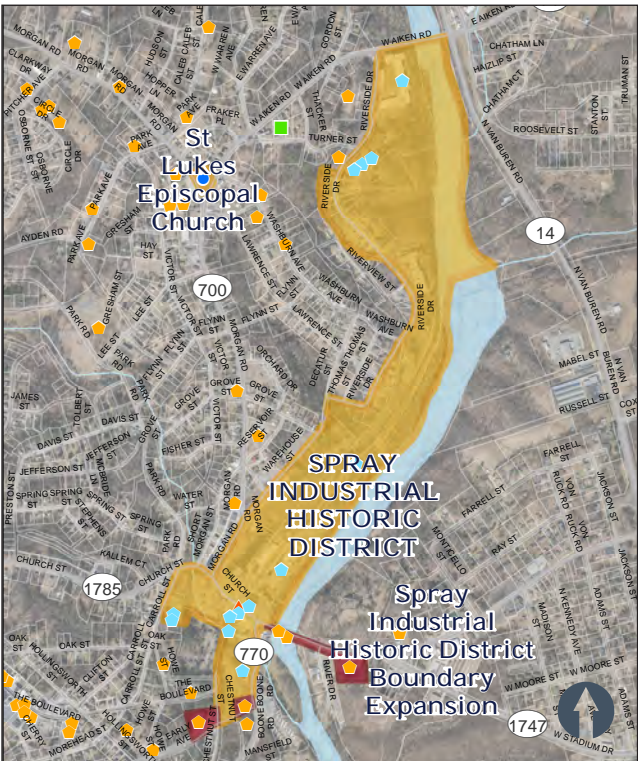
A district boundary that is displayed as “**determined eligible**” has been determined eligible under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Office. A “National Register” boundary is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Resources

- National Register individual listing
- NR and Local Landmark
- Study List individual entry
- ▲ SL and DOE
- ▲ Determined Eligible - DOE
- ◆ Surveyed Only
- ◆ Surveyed in NRHD

NCHPO Districts

- National Register Historic District
- Determined Eligible
- Study Listed
- City Limits
- ETJ



▶ Spray Industrial Historic District (National Register) and Draper Commercial Historic District (Study Listed) boundaries

Parks and Recreation

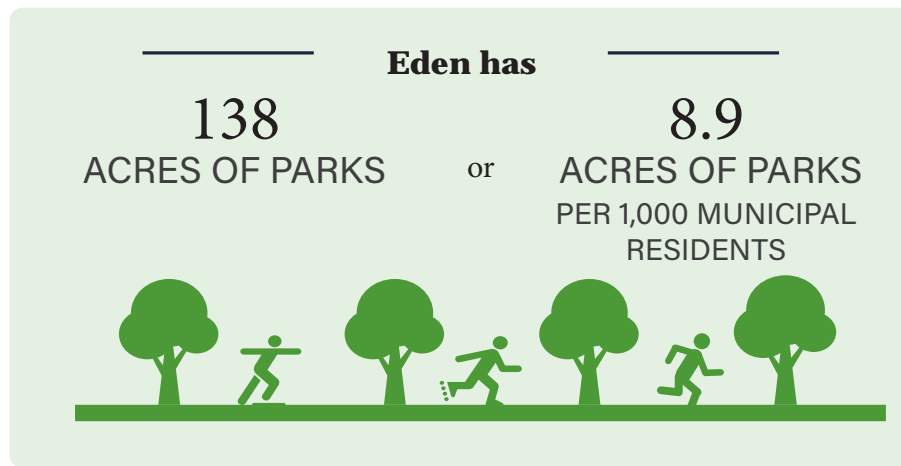
Eden’s rivers, wooded areas, and City parks offer something for almost anyone who wishes to recreate. The 2017 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan inventoried the City-owned parks system and found that Eden offers almost 10 acres of parks per 1,000 residents, which is the National Recreation Association’s standard for parks access.

The report also specified that while Eden provides sufficient park acreage to meet such standards, improvements are needed to many of the City’s recreation facilities. Freedom Park has experienced many upgrades in recent years, but others have not. This sentiment was echoed in stakeholder interviews, where residents expressed the need for upgrades to neighborhood parks such as DeHart Ball Park.

Another recreation theme heard throughout the community engagement was river access. Some community members use the rivers for boating or fishing, but many more just want to spend time near them. There are currently limited options for those who want to enjoy Eden’s waterfront.

Recreation on and around the water has potential to be a major tourism draw for the City. Eden’s tourism bureau, Explore Eden NC, promotes the rivers in its efforts, and increased access will only help their cause.

Eden’s Parks and Recreational Facilities	
Parks	Acres
Grogan Park	11.9
Freedom Park	60.3
Bridge Street Recreation Center	4.2
Dehart Ball Field	6.3
Morgan Road Senior Center	2.5
Ernestine Hampton Park	6.5
Smith River Greenway and Island Ford Landing River Access	25.4
Leaksville Landing River Access	1.8
Draper Landing River Access	0.3
Boone Road Community Center	0.6
Mill Ave Recreation Center	18.6

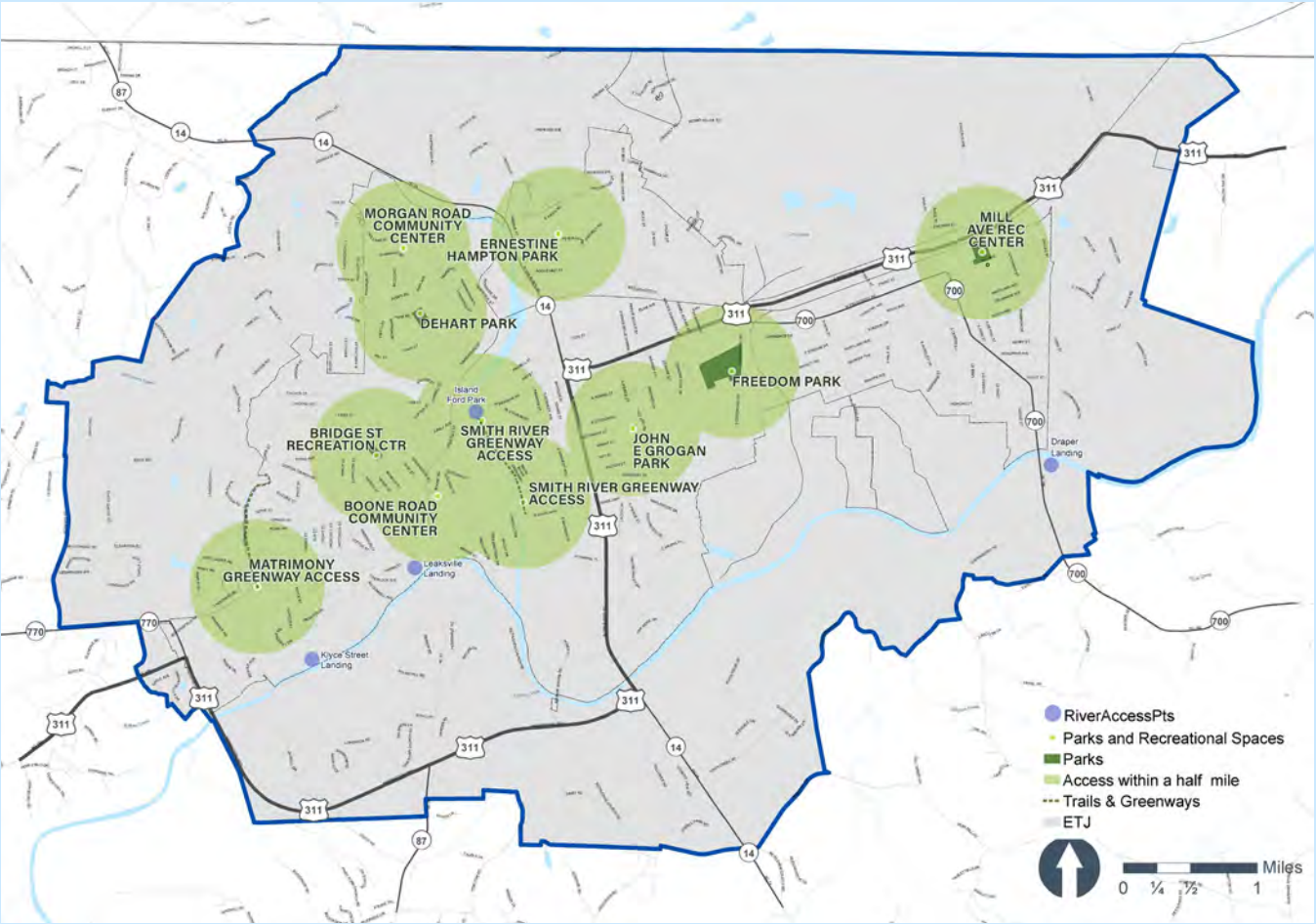


PARKS ACCESS ANALYSIS

To measure the level of service for parks in Eden, the project team conducted a parks access analysis. This analysis looked at the demographics of residents living within a half-mile of parks and greenway access points within the study area. A half-mile journey to a park is the nationally used standard to consider a park accessible.

The parks access analysis for Eden shows that residents living closest to parks are reflective of the overall population of the City and the study area. Vulnerable populations, including seniors and those experiencing poverty, have similar access to parks as the rest of the population.

	Population	Median HHI	Poverty Rate	Pop. over 65 years	Minority Pop
Eden	15,421	\$34,917	23%	20.0%	34.2%
Study Area	19,385	\$33,422	20%	13.4%	27.9%
Parks Access Analysis Area	8,573	\$34,144	19%	23.3%	32.8%



Economic Conditions

Eden's economy is currently transitioning from that of a mid-twentieth century mill town into its future. Prosperity derived from the presence of the mills has declined as the factories closed. The closure of some of the larger factories have left residents looking for work, but new employers and new types of jobs are coming into the City. Most notably, Purina will be taking over the former Miller factory and will bring over 350 jobs and \$450 million of investment to Eden. Data also shows that the employment rate rose 6% from 2014 to 2019.

Eden's Strategic Plan discussed the need to attract more large employers back to the City, which feedback from stakeholders and the community survey echoed. The Strategic Plan determined that Eden will use quality of place as its main economic development tool, meaning it will attract employers through the City's amenities such as housing, recreation, entertainment, and cost of living. Many of the

goals of the Strategic Plan are supported by recommendations in this Plan.

Large employers are not the only drivers of economy in Eden. The several downtowns are home to many small businesses.



► Gildan Activewear, located in Eden, is the 9th largest employer in Rockingham County per NC Dept. of Commerce

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Growing Sectors



Education & Healthcare



Transportation,
Warehousing, Utilities



Wholesale Trade

Decreasing Sectors



Manufacturing



Professional,
Management



Agriculture

Eden's growing and declining employment sectors tell its economic story from 2010 to 2019. Though manufacturing was decreasing as of this data, it is likely to grow again after Purina begins operations. Land use needs of growing sectors and potential future employers were a top concern heard during stakeholder interviews. Stakeholders also identified housing and recreation as potential amenities to attract new employers to the City.

Source: US Census

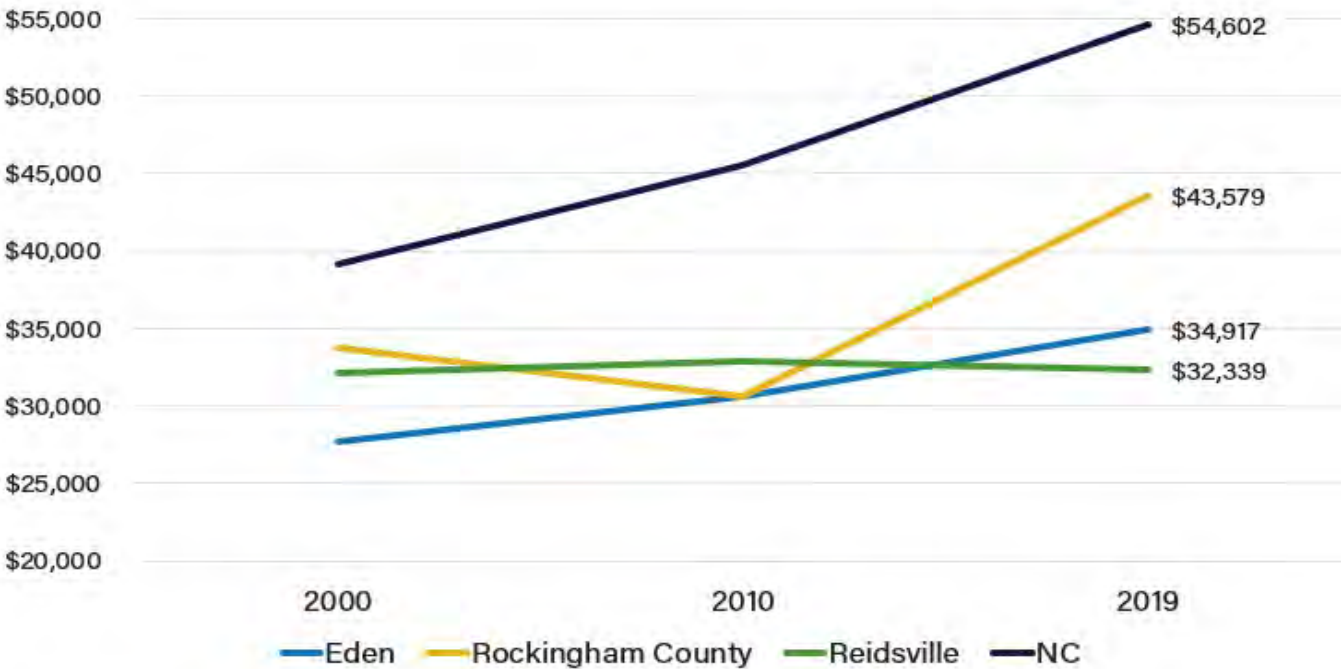
EMPLOYMENT RATE

Eden's employment rate has risen 6% over 5 years!



Chart Survey/Program: 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Source: US Census, 2010 and 2019 ACS 5-year estimates

Transportation

Roadways and Parking

Eden's main corridors allow residents to travel relatively easily between the downtowns and neighborhoods by automobile. The large open space parcels and distances between commercial centers (Leaksville, Spray, Draper, and the Central Area) make getting across the City somewhat more difficult in anything but an automobile. The distance to reach a destination by bike or on foot is often prohibitive, especially when there are gaps in the sidewalk network and no real pedestrian infrastructure. Such conditions can be improved by continuing to construct greenways, making sure sidewalks are prevalent, especially along major thoroughfares, and by creating off-road connections between greenways and nearby streets.

According to NCDOT's 2020 Powell Bill Allocations Report, Eden has 105.29 miles of roadway, with a total annual allocation of \$430,732.24 in Powell Bill Funds. The City Council continues to approve street resurfacing contracts, including 2021 projects on Patterson Street and Kennedy Avenue, while NCDOT works to make sure roads like Kings Highway are milled and resurfaced on a regular basis. However, the City has determined that a higher level of annual maintenance funding would be more proactive and cost-effective in the long term.

Downtowns

The City of Eden has implemented two successful streetscape projects. The first project was completed in 2008 along Washington Street in Uptown Eden (Leaksville). The second project, constructed in 2008-09, was in Draper. The City invested nearly \$500,000 to help implement both streetscape plans, which featured improvements such as crosswalk treatments, curb extensions, planting strips, street trees, and other amenities to

improve the aesthetics of the streetscape and calm traffic.

With new development occurring along Washington Street, parking has become more of an issue. The City is exploring options for leasing new parking spaces and expanding options for public parking. During special events and peak hours, the on-street parking spaces are insufficient, so having more surface parking areas within a block or two of Washington Street is imperative. The City currently has several projects in the pipeline to address parking demand, which can be seen in the Downtown Improvements Map on [page XX](#).

Highways

Multiple highway improvements in the area could offer more regional accessibility for Eden residents and commuters, with the new I-73 connector and I-785 project providing broader access to the area, along with the Greensboro Urban Loop easing connections to I-40 and I-85 as well as the Greensboro metro area. The City has successfully partnered with neighboring communities and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to



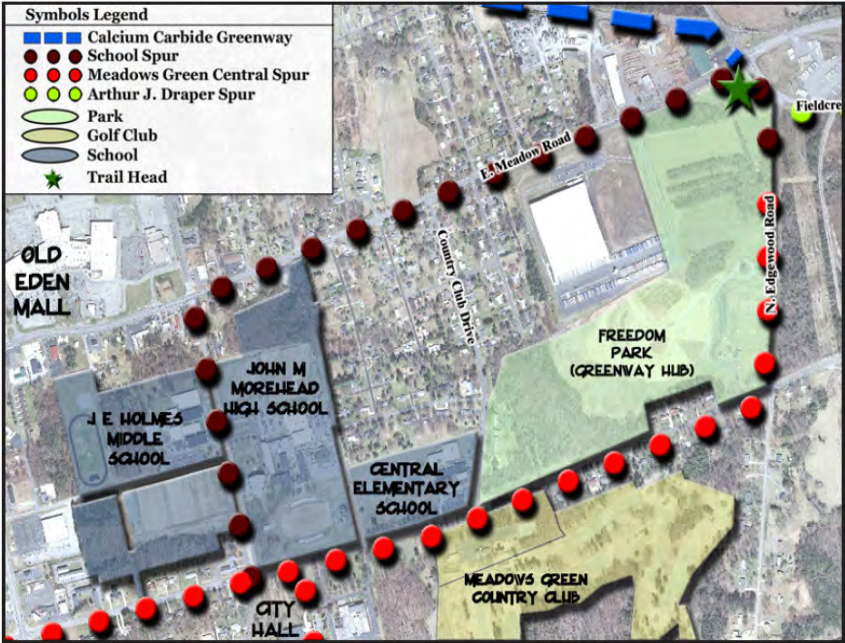
► Streetscape work in Draper, via Eden Pedestrian Plan (2010)

expedite funding for the \$34 million connector road project linking Berry Hill Road (U.S. Highway 311) to the Danville Expressway, which could be operational by 2025. This project will enable both quicker travel to Danville’s downtown and easier access to bypass it. Another nearby project that could affect Eden’s traffic patterns and regional growth is Interstate 785 (I-785). When completed, I-785 will run about 50 miles, from I-85 in Greensboro to U.S. Routes 58 and 360 in Danville, Virginia.

Greenways

Greenway	Length (miles)
Smith River	1.3 - paved
Matrimony Creek	1.0 - paved
Freedom Park	0.4 - natural surface
Leaksville Landing	0.3 - natural surface
Holmes Middle School	<0.5 - natural surface

The rivers and railways are important historic, scenic, and economic elements for the City of Eden. Most of Eden’s existing off-road public trails are within the greenways in the table. Public input from the Greenway Master Plan indicated that the community has a good number of exercise tracks to walk and jog on, but people would really like to see more multi-use trails/greenways. The City has been successful in partnering to fund raise for greenway projects, with Duke Energy-funded grants to construct the Grogan Park Nature Trail, Matrimony Creek Nature Trail, and the Freedom Park Nature Trail. The City also received grant funding to restore the Draper Landing and add the Klyce Street river access point. A grant to fund the Dan River Nature Trail, a 1,600 linear foot trail running from the Leaksville Landing to Bridge Street, was received from the Duke Energy Water Resources Fund.



► Greenway Master Plan Concept for Freedom Park

Bicycles and Pedestrians

The City of Eden’s village centers are very walkable, with robust sidewalk systems, often with updated curb ramps, benches, and landscaping. In some areas of Eden, walking can be difficult, especially along the high-volume roadways that make walking challenging and unsafe. Separated land uses result in longer distances between home and work, school, or shopping, which discourage walking as a form of transportation. The lack of safe infrastructure along key corridors is a deterrent to riding a bicycle for transportation and even walking short distances.

More than 10% of people in Eden do not have access to a motor vehicle. This includes nearly 1 in 5 individuals over the age of 65 who must walk, bike, or take public transportation. Ninety-three percent of survey respondents from the 2010 Pedestrian Plan listed a walking-friendly community as “important” or “very important” and 54% of respondents ranked “new sidewalks” as the action most needed to increase walking in Eden.

According to a 2007 sidewalk inventory, Eden

has approximately 25 miles of sidewalk that is an average of four feet wide. The study reported that 91% of Eden’s sidewalks were either in “Good” or “Fair” condition and found that utility poles were the main source of obstruction.

Cycle Facilities

Eden’s primary roadway corridors are the most in need of bicycle infrastructure, and should have sufficient right-of-way to include bike lanes in future improvement construction projects. Eden has many activity centers and “downtown” commercial areas, but they are separated by enough distance that people are afraid to take to the streets on a bicycle to get to their destination. Without dedicated (and separated) bike lanes, roads like Kings Highway, Van Buren Road, and Meadow Road will not be safe for bicycling. Even Stadium Drive, Edgewood Road, and Fieldcrest Road are not comfortable for bicycling, with no paved shoulder and few passing lanes. The City would benefit from a comprehensive bicycle plan.

Transit

Eden is serviced by the SKAT transit system, which is a fixed bus route operated by Rockingham County with nineteen stops within the City Limits. The route provides access to several multifamily housing units, each core business district, and most main thoroughfares. Buses are wheelchair accessible and are equipped with bicycle racks. Additional SKAT routes include a Reidsville Route and a Western



Walkability

Truly walkable communities take into consideration the following attributes in order to encourage walking as a preferable mode of transportation:

- ▶ **Convenience:** The walk must be direct and convenient, with access to popular destinations. Having a sidewalk system without gaps and accessible by all users is imperative.
- ▶ **Aesthetics:** Landscaping, attractive sidewalk materials, lighting, and cleanliness all matter, as well public art and stormwater management amenities.
- ▶ **Activity:** Pedestrian routes should be activated by compatible and interesting adjacent uses – restaurants, storefront windows, outdoor dining, and natural settings like woods or residential neighborhoods. Preserving Eden’s business district façades, with active commercial tenants, is key.
- ▶ **Safety:** People want to feel safe from both traffic and criminal activity. Open sight lines, designated pedestrian signals, streetlights, active frontages, and buffers from the roadway are critical.
- ▶ **Comfort:** Often overlooked, access to shade when it is hot and sunshine when it is cool can dramatically affect the overall success of a sidewalk system. This means prioritizing deciduous shade trees at regular intervals, benches to rest, and wide sidewalks.



The City has invested nearly \$500,000 to help implement streetscape plans in Uptown and Draper.

Land Use

Existing Land Use

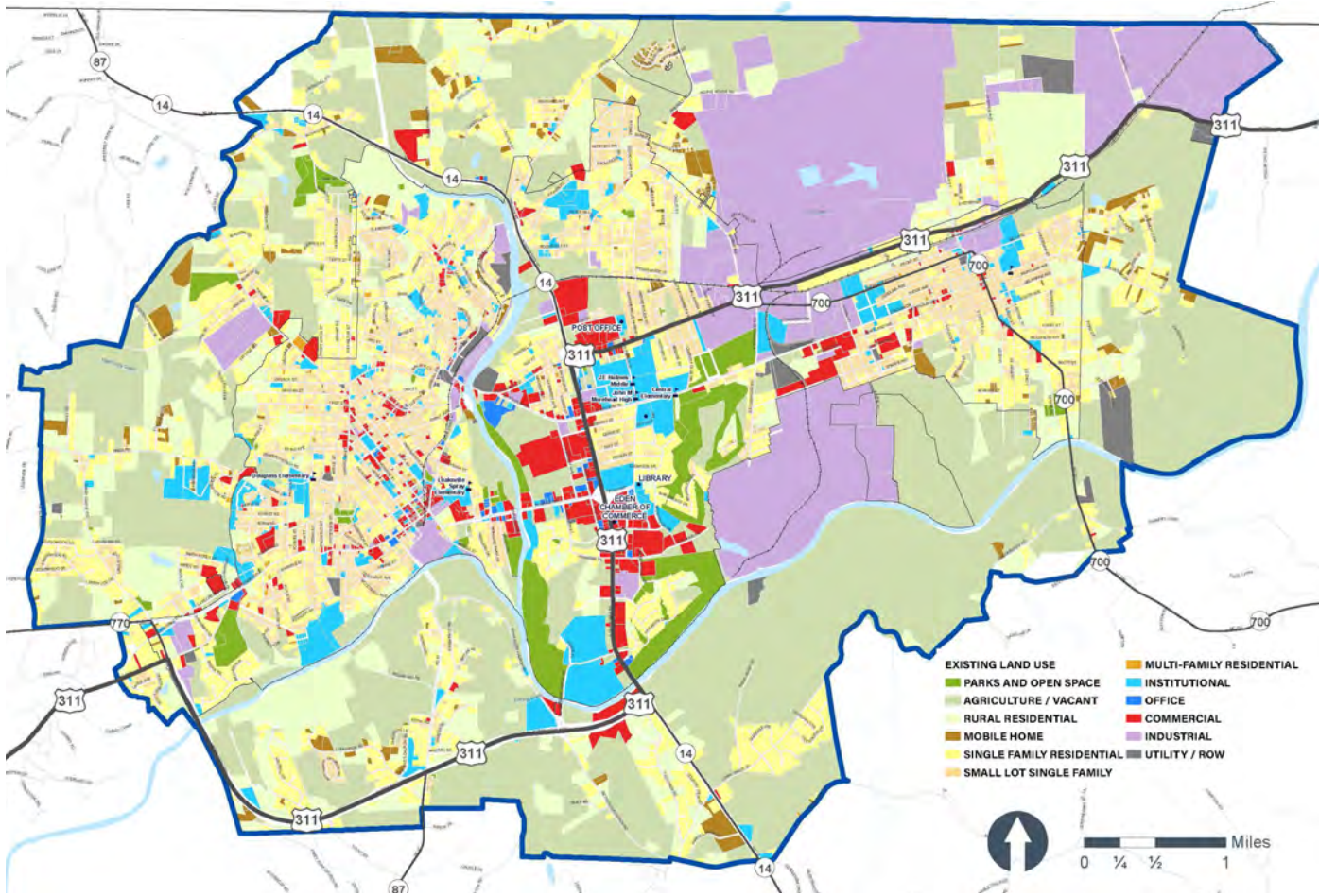
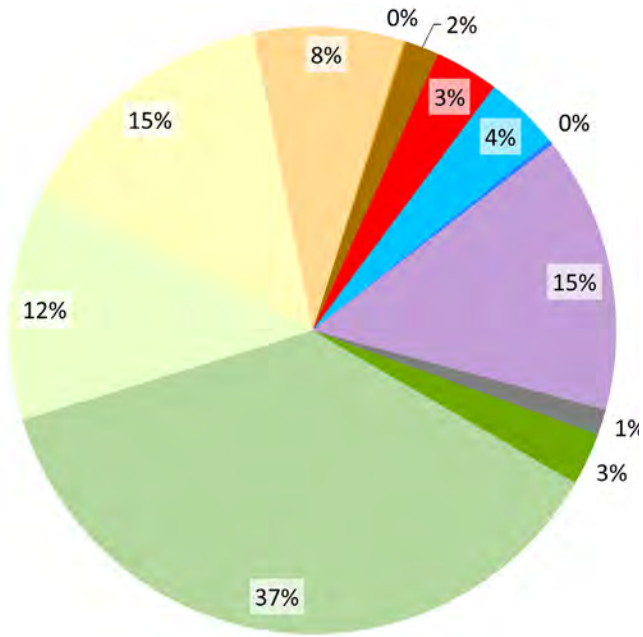
Existing land use is determined using a combination of County tax parcel data and imagery. This shows the current use of parcels and spatial patterns. Currently in the study area:

- » Residential uses occupy 36% of land area (include rural residential).
- » Industrial, commercial, and office uses occupy 18% of land area.
- » Eden has a large amount of industrial land, such as the mills off Church Street, that are prime for future conversions to new employment.
- » Availability of industrial land is a top economic development concern.
- » Renovations of existing historical structures, such as the downtown hotel project, are converting land uses while utilizing existing developed land.

**Vacant or
agricultural land
occupies about 38%
of the study area**



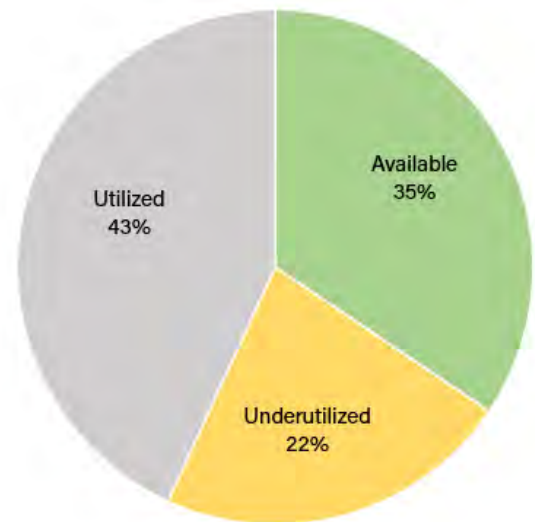
USE	ACRES	SHARE
Park/Open Space	645	2.90%
Vacant/Agriculture	8450	37.98%
Rural Residential	2781	12.50%
Single Family Res	3316	14.90%
Single Family Small Lot (<0.5 acre)	1828	8.22%
Multi-family	31	0.14%
Mobile Home	414	1.86%
Commercial	784	3.52%
Institutional	922	4.14%
Office	60	0.27%
Industrial	3369	15.14%
Utility	313	1.41%



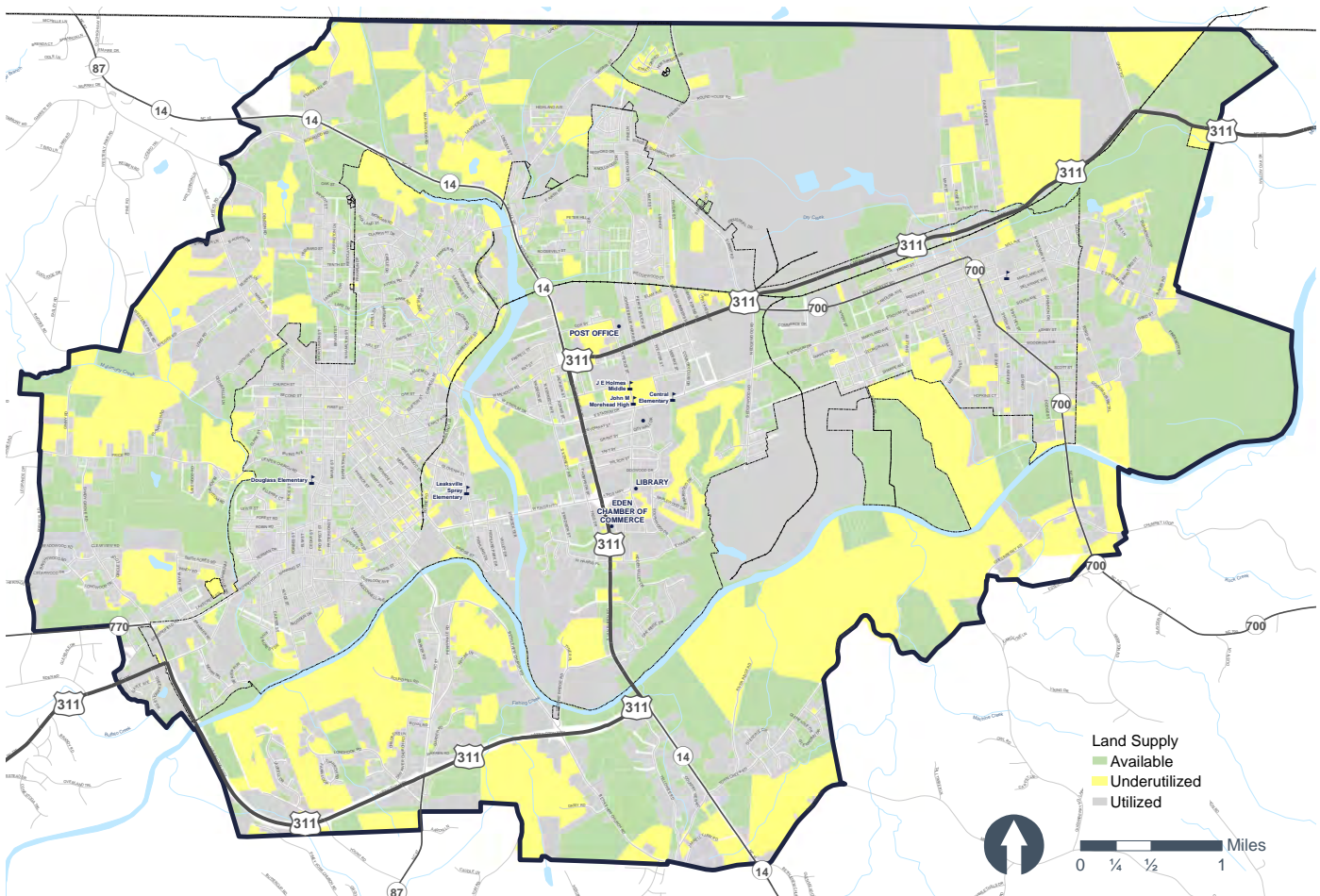
Land Supply

For a land supply analysis, land is divided into three categories: available, utilized, and underutilized. These classifications are based on the value of the land compared to the value of the buildings on it. Properties with high value structures and certain kinds of structures are considered utilized and less likely to be redeveloped. The analysis does not take into consideration development limitations on the land, such as environmental constraints like floodplains and steep slopes. It also does not take into account whether the property is currently occupied and operating.

The land supply analysis shows that 58% of the area within the corporate limits qualifies as utilized. As noted, this does not mean they are occupied and in use. Some of the large factory sites are not in use, but could be adapted into use in the future.



Available	Vacant, farm, or forest with no significant structure
Underutilized	Potential for infill and redevelopment based on structure value to land value ratio
Utilized	Built lands not likely to redevelop





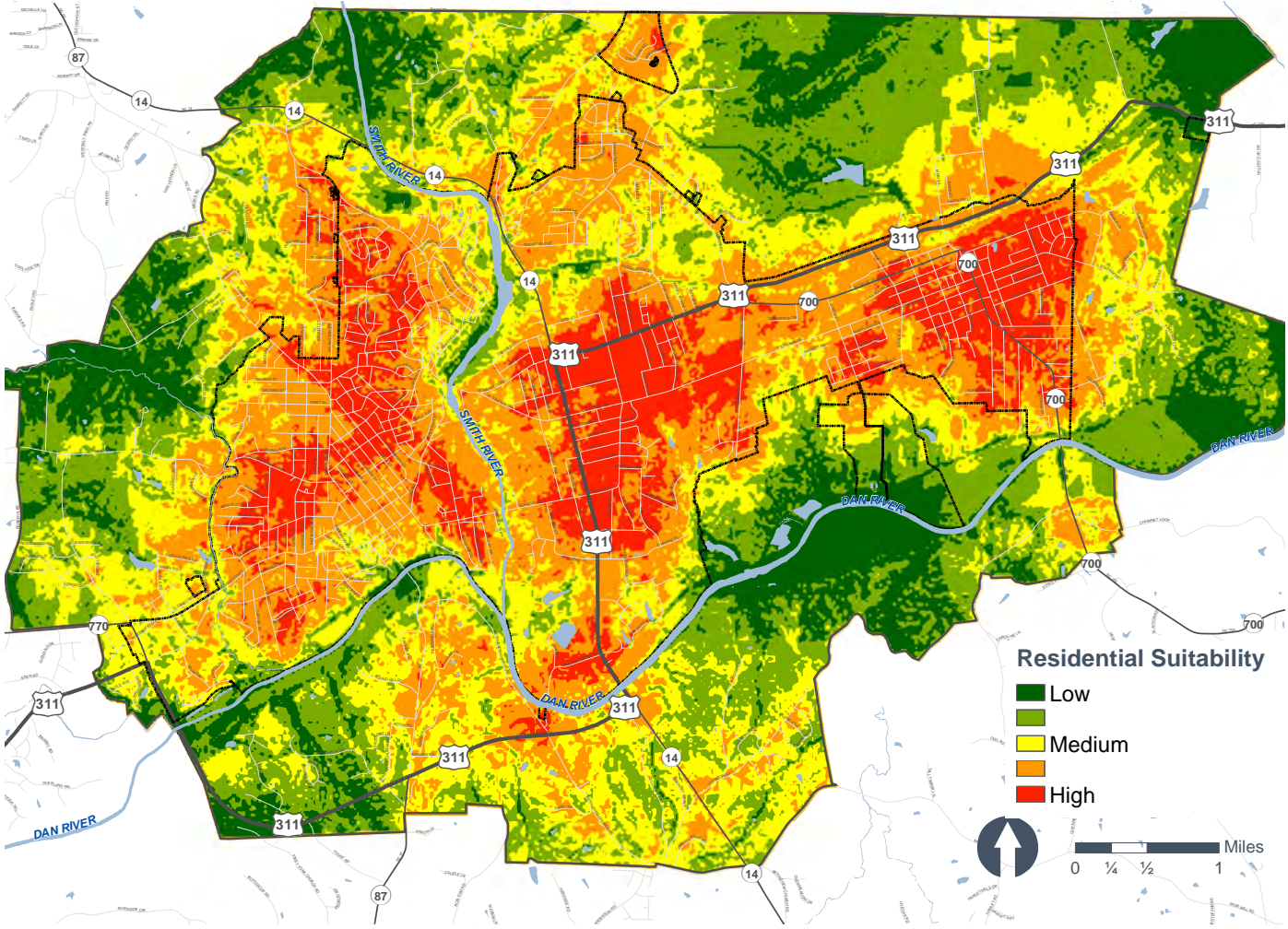
Suitability Analysis

Suitability mapping is a method of determining the best or most likely areas for certain uses to be located. It is done using GIS software and a user-selected set of criteria, or inputs. Based on the inputs, areas within the study area are determined to be more or less supportive of the use in question.

Users choose the set of criteria, or inputs, separately for each type of suitability analysis to be done. For example, when carrying out a residential suitability analysis in GIS, a user will assign lower values for areas closer to industrial uses, as it is unlikely or undesirable that homes will be built near existing industry. Higher values would be assigned to land near schools or parks, because these are more desirable areas for building homes. By layering several input values and calculating a final suitability value for every cell within a virtual grid on the map, the GIS software produces a map showing the areas where uses are more and less likely to be located.

The following pages show the suitability maps for residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The inputs for each map are shown alongside them. Suitability mapping is a very useful, but not the only, tool used to create the future land use map for the City.

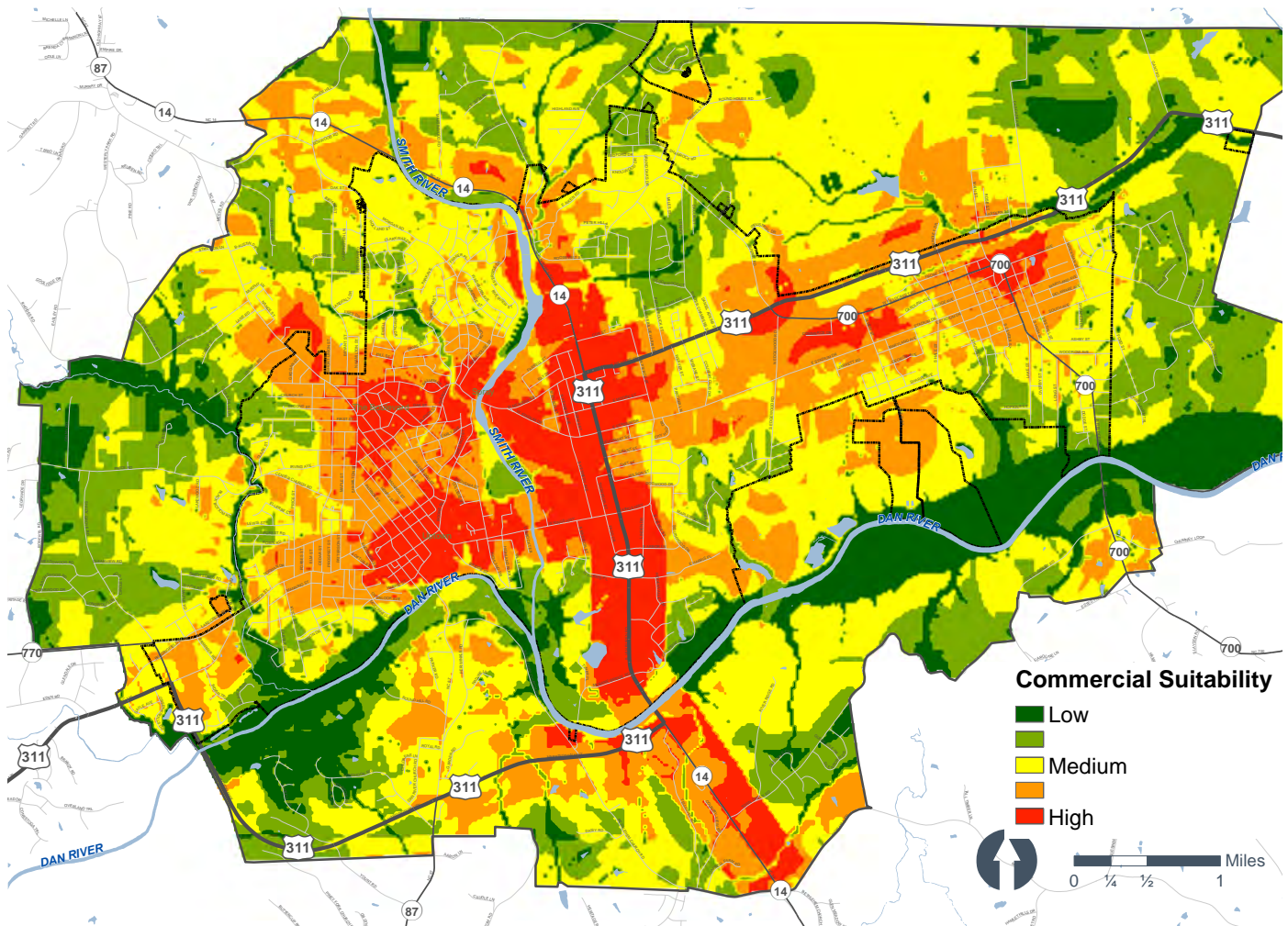
RESIDENTIAL SUITABILITY



Residential Suitability Inputs

- ▶ Proximity to concentrations of existing streets
- ▶ Proximity to retail and services
- ▶ Proximity to schools and parks
- ▶ Distance from industrial uses
- ▶ Distance from environmental constraints
- ▶ Distance from water supply watershed regulations
- ▶ Area not located on steep slopes
- ▶ Access to public utilities
- ▶ Lands on large parcels
- ▶ Distance from agriculture
- ▶ Proximity to downtowns and within municipal boundaries

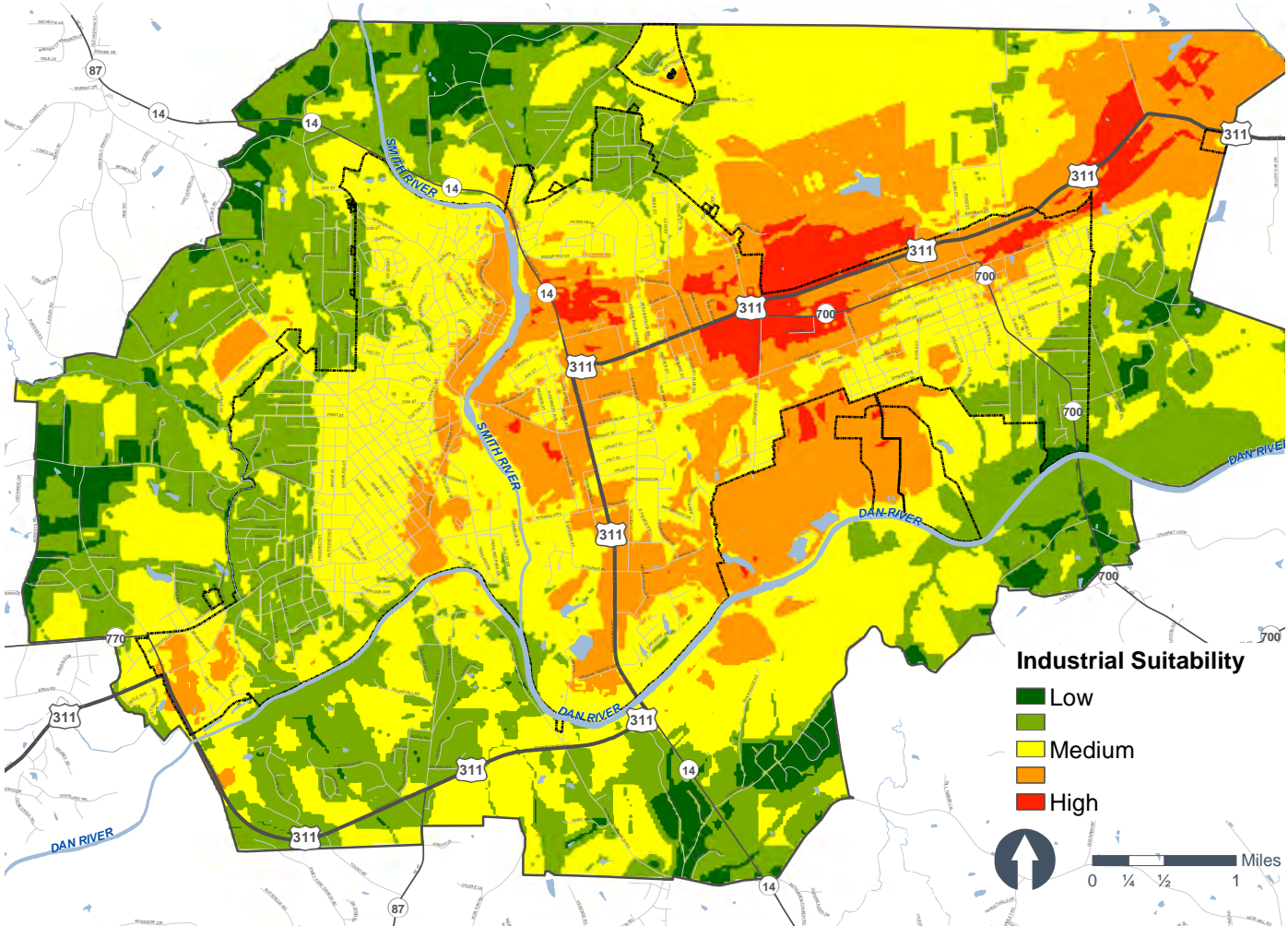
COMMERCIAL SUITABILITY



Commercial Suitability Inputs

- ▶ Proximity to existing residential development
- ▶ Proximity to existing commercial uses
- ▶ Proximity to Downtowns
- ▶ Proximity to high traffic roadways
- ▶ Adjacency to major roads
- ▶ Distance from environmental constraints

INDUSTRIAL SUITABILITY



Industrial Suitability Inputs

- ▶ Distance from residential uses
- ▶ Proximity to existing industrial uses
- ▶ Proximity to railroads
- ▶ Proximity to existing utilities
- ▶ Distance from environmental constraints
- ▶ Lands on large parcels

Infrastructure and Utilities

Sanitation

Eden's Solid Waste Division (of the Public Works Department) provides trash collection, limited recycling, and bulk pickup for household and yard waste. The City recognizes that there may be ongoing fee increases or changes in service to bring balance to the County's fund and the City's budget for processing solid waste.

Electricity

Eden's electricity is now provided by Duke Energy's Dan River Combined Cycle plant, which harnesses the power of state-of-the-art technology and natural gas in a 620-megawatt plant that has dramatically downsized its carbon footprint since shifting away from coal. The station now in service is clean and efficient, serving up to 620,000 customers.

Excavation of the two coal ash basins at the former Dan River Steam Station was completed in May 2019. More than 1.8 million tons of ash were removed from the basins and either recycled via cement kilns or placed in fully lined landfills. This was partially in response to the 2014 coal ash spill that polluted the Dan River.

Telecommunications providers AT&T, CenturyLink and Charter Communications (Spectrum) assure that Eden's residential, commercial, and industrial customers have the bandwidth to function in any capacity. Reliable electric provision and high-speed fiber optic Internet connectivity benefit residents by providing telecommuting options and the capacity to operate businesses remotely. As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, this capability is essential and can mean the difference between success and failure for many small businesses, freelance workers, and others - essential to most peoples' daily life.

Water and Sewer

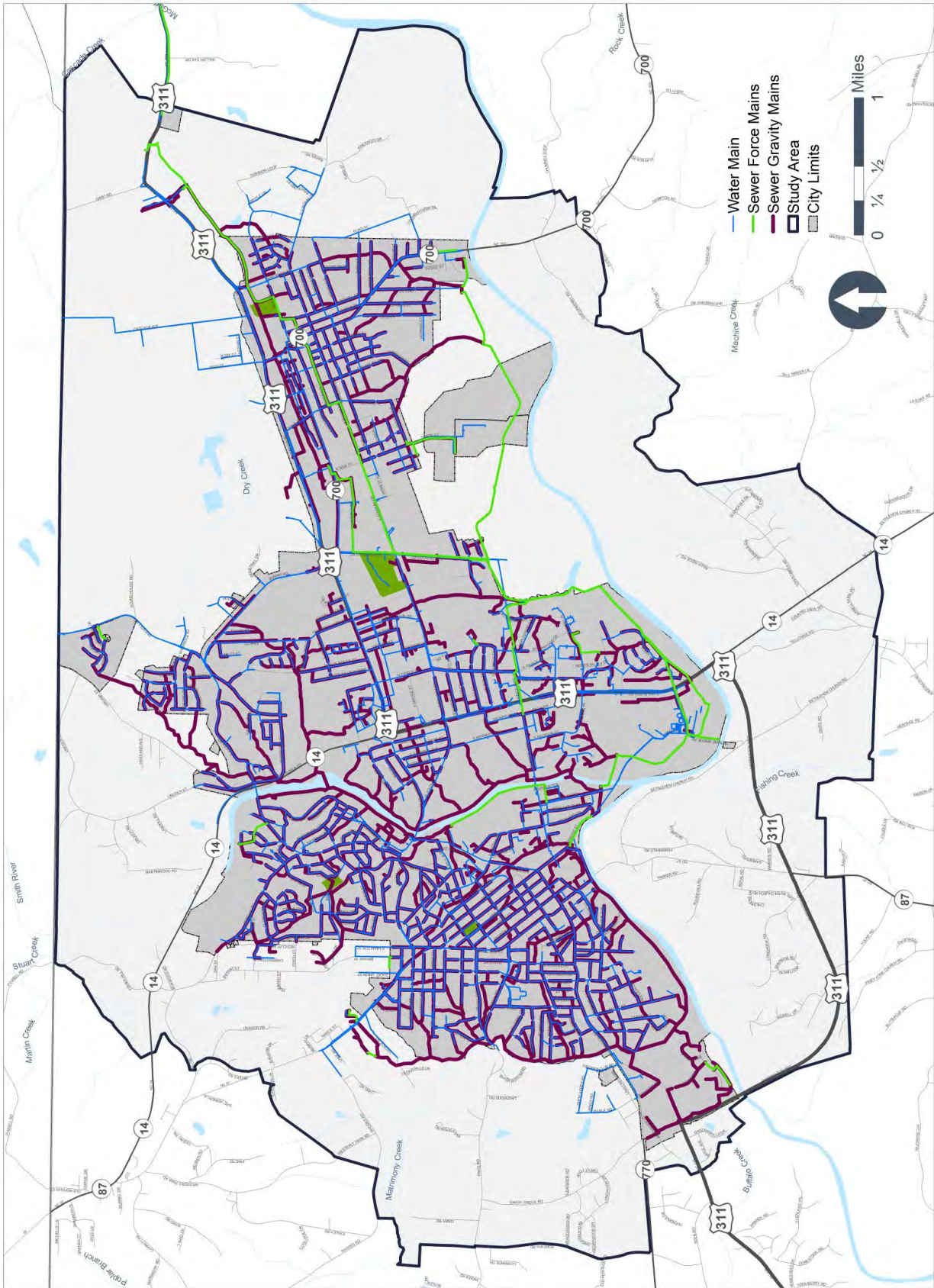
Eden's municipal water comes from the nearby Dan River, which originates in Virginia and flows through Eden and on to Kerr Reservoir on the Roanoke River. The City's water treatment plant, the Robert A. Harris Water Filtration Plant (functioning since 1978), is located on the banks of the Dan River just off South Van Buren Road (US Highway 311). This filtration plant produces roughly 5 million gallons of clean drinking water every day.

The Wastewater Treatment Division is responsible for the treatment of the City's domestic and commercial sewage. The collection system consists of 145+ miles of gravity and force main sewer pipelines. There are 20 pump stations in the collection system. These range in size from pumping a few thousand gallons per day to more than five million gallons a day. All of the City sewer lines drain, collect, or are pumped to the Mebane Bridge Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), which can treat 13.5 million gallons per day.



► Dan River ash basins after excavation
(2019, via Duke Energy)

UTILITIES



Previous Planning

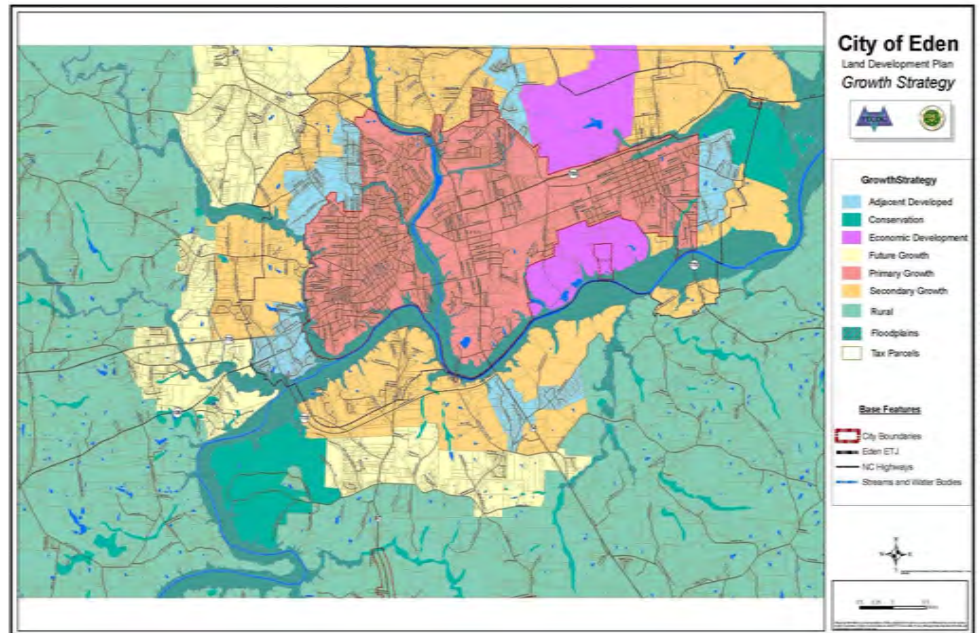
2007 Land Development Plan

Vision: A growing City with well-managed growth, well-preserved historic areas, lively and pedestrian-friendly downtown, neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, and preserved and accessible natural areas.

As Eden's first land development plan since 1977, this is the predecessor to the upcoming Comprehensive Plan. Goals of this plan include preserving and enhancing existing features such as Downtown, the natural environment, and historic neighborhoods. It also included a goal of connecting downtown Leaksville and the NC-14 shopping area. To achieve the goals, the plan mentioned updating the City zoning ordinance, in favor of something more nuanced that could better influence aesthetics. The City also indicated a desire to provide for more open space, parks, greenways, and trails and to leverage existing historic and natural features for tourism.

Top Themes

- » Historic Preservation and Reuse
- » Downtown Redevelopment and Revitalization
- » Parks, Recreation, and Greenway System Development
- » Community Appearance
- » River Corridor Protection, Access, and Use



► Growth Strategy Map from the 2007 Land Development Plan

Land Use themes:

- » Move from "separation of uses" toward "mixed-use development"
- » Move from "conventional development" to "cluster development"
- » Included "Growth Strategy Map", which was separate but complimentary to Future Land Use Map. Mapped the general breakdown of how to grow or preserve different parts of the city.
- » Goal to create an NC14 Corridor Master Plan.

Takeaways for the 2040 Plan:

Eden envisions a future of compact development, where new development is mostly infill or cluster-style. Connections between different parts of the City are also important. These various centers in Eden should be pedestrian-friendly and attractive.

Positively Eden Strategic Plan (2018)

How does the City of Eden, NC, attract people and increase long-term private economic activity to build a well-funded city with a quality of place that attracts even more people and investment?

This 5-year Strategic plan is a focused set of goals and action items intended to galvanize the community and create the future residents want. It is broader than the 2007 Land Use Plan in terms of the topics, but is more specific in its vision and timeline. The two key aims of the plan are to encourage economic development and attract residents despite decreasing population and tax revenue. To achieve this, the Strategic Plan identifies existing aspects of Eden, such as the downtowns, older neighborhoods, and parks, that the City can leverage now to spur investment and attract residents.

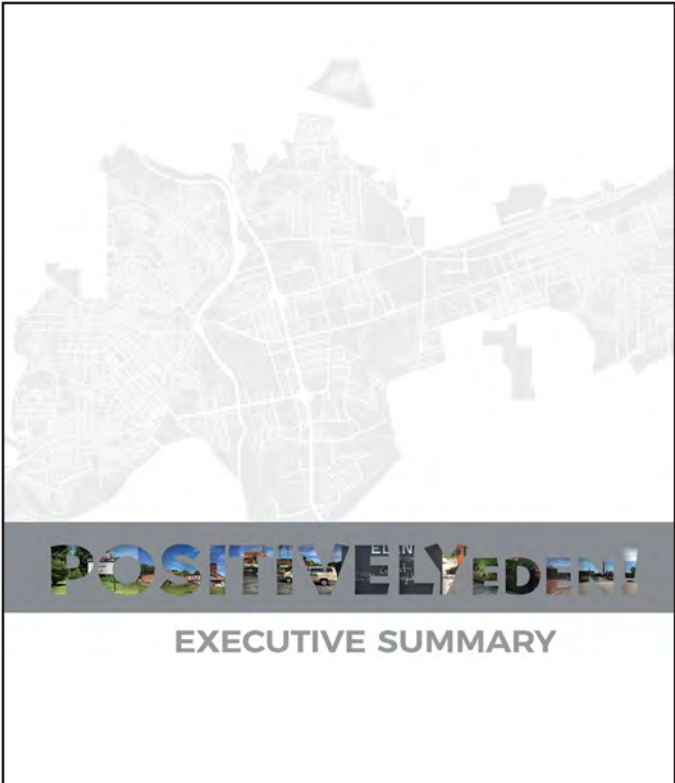
.....
The Strategic Plan identifies **quality of place** as the City’s core economic development strategy.
.....

Eden already has all the “parts” in place – historic downtowns, outdoor opportunities, traditional neighborhoods, space for industry – but needs to better leverage them to attract more investment and residents. Key strategies within the larger “Strategy Areas” emphasize marketing, branding, and publicizing Eden. Place-based recommendations include Downtown public space improvements, greenways and trail upgrades, and general public realm enhancements. It cites the 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a key part of this strategy.

Positively Eden Strategy Areas

- » Broaden the Impact of Downtown
- » Increase Economic Vitality
- » Boost Neighborhood Development
- » Integrate Health & Recreation Opportunities
- » Engage Citizens

Takeaways for the 2040 Plan:
The most salient point of the Strategic Plan is quality of place as the key economic development strategy. The 2040 Plan should offer solutions for improving and expanding Eden’s existing parks, natural resources, downtowns, and housing stock.



► The Positively Eden Strategic Plan

Eden Pedestrian Plan (2021)

The City's Pedestrian Plan update includes recommendations for new sidewalks along streets like Washington Street, West Stadium Drive, Moore Street, Pierce Street, Cox Street, Mill Avenue, South Kennedy Street, South Hamilton Street, North Edgewood Road, Front Street, Hundley Drive, and South Fieldcrest Street to connect to the Draper Boat Landing. Many of these sidewalk recommendations are short segments that provide a needed connection and fill a missing gap, though some are longer corridor needs.

Takeaways for the 2040 Plan:

This Plan identifies a few priority greenway recommendations, including a multi-use path on South Hale Street from Maryland Avenue to Sharpe Avenue and a multiuse path along the west side of South Van Buren Road (Highway 311). The plan also identifies intersections that would benefit from improved pedestrian infrastructure..

Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2017)

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan inventoried existing facilities and analyzed them through the lens of community needs and values. The Plan found that Eden is very close to its goal of providing 9.5 acres of park space per 1,000 residents, only needing 9 more acres to reach the goal of 147 total acres. Analysis found that Eden has a balanced mixture of parks and recreation facilities that are well-distributed throughout the community. Many identified improvements were already programmed for future funding. The top program desired by the community was senior-related programming, which reflects the aging population in Eden.

The Parks & Recreation Plan also recommends adding exercise equipment on trails and increasing trail and sidewalk connections to existing parks from neighborhoods. Short trail

connections to key park, civic, community, and business destinations from existing sidewalks and trails was presented as a low-cost way to expand the utility and use of the sidewalk, side path, trail, and greenway system in Eden.

Takeaways for the 2040 Plan:

The Smith River Greenway was a top reported destination. The Parks & Recreation Plan recommends extending this greenway north and lists a rail trail along the western edge of the river as a "Priority Greenway." This trail would serve as a high-profile greenway and could catalyze redevelopment of this area's post-industrial sites, providing a recreation and transportation facility for nearby residents.

Rockingham County Pathways Plan (2013)

Rockingham County Pathways is a long-range plan developed by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council and Dan River Basin Association that gathered input from municipalities, citizens, business owners, and landowners to identify and prioritize opportunities to create recreational trails throughout Rockingham County. The plan lists the following goals:

- » Link safe places to improve health by increasing the variety of opportunities residents have for physical activity.
- » Expand recreation opportunities and improve access, providing outdoor activities for all age groups.
- » Protect open space, streams, and rivers by allowing people to experience and appreciate open space on designated routes.
- » Support economic development by offering local destinations, luring industry with a demonstrated high quality of life for their employees.

Takeaways for the 2040 Plan:

The County Pathways Plan identifies several miles of new land trails and potential river access points. These include a segment connecting the existing Smith River Greenway northern terminus to the railway trestle near the Rhode Island Mill apartments. The plan also envisions a continuous trail along the Dan River and Smith River, connecting to Virginia and to Stoneville.

converting Harrington to a partial cloverleaf interchange and Kings to an eight-phase diamond interchange. An extension of Harrington Highway connection to Quesinberry Road and proposed NC 14/87 Bypass from Washington Street to Oakland Avenue were two large new facility locations recommended. The plan also noted that the rail line from near Summit Road that crosses the Smith River before ending in Spray is inactive.

Rockingham CTP (2010)

Rockingham County completed their current Comprehensive Transportation Plan in 2010 and during that process several main thoroughfares in Eden were identified as needing improvements. NC Highway 14 from the US 29 interchange in Reidsville to Bethlehem Church Road was the largest project recommended. Today this roadway is a consistent 5-lane facility that was at the time projected to be near capacity by 2035. To relieve congestion, the Rockingham CTP suggested converting this to a 4-lane divided roadway with a raised planted median, tying into the boulevard standards recommended for NC 14 from Bethlehem Church Road to Virginia in the 2009 Eden CTP. Additional Eden CTP recommendations were included in the county CTP. Of these, only the interchange conversion at Kings Highway and NC 14 have been included in the 2020-2029 STIP.

Eden CTP 2009

The 2009 Eden Comprehensive Transportation Plan recommended improvements to several of the City's major thoroughfare and included new roadway connections and extensions. Notably, the NC Highway 14 project suggests converting the existing 5-lane facility to a 4-lane divided boulevard with a raised planted median broken up by turning lanes at key intersections. This included intersection improvements at Harrington Highway and Kings Highway,

Takeaways for the 2040 Plan:

Of the projects recommended in the Eden and Rockingham CTPs, a number of them are holdover projects that were identified in the 1997 City of Eden Thoroughfare Plan. With the City currently working on a Pedestrian Plan, it is worth investigating whether these previous projects relate to current goals and recent developments in the City. Alternatives or refocusing of the City's transportation needs may be recommended.

