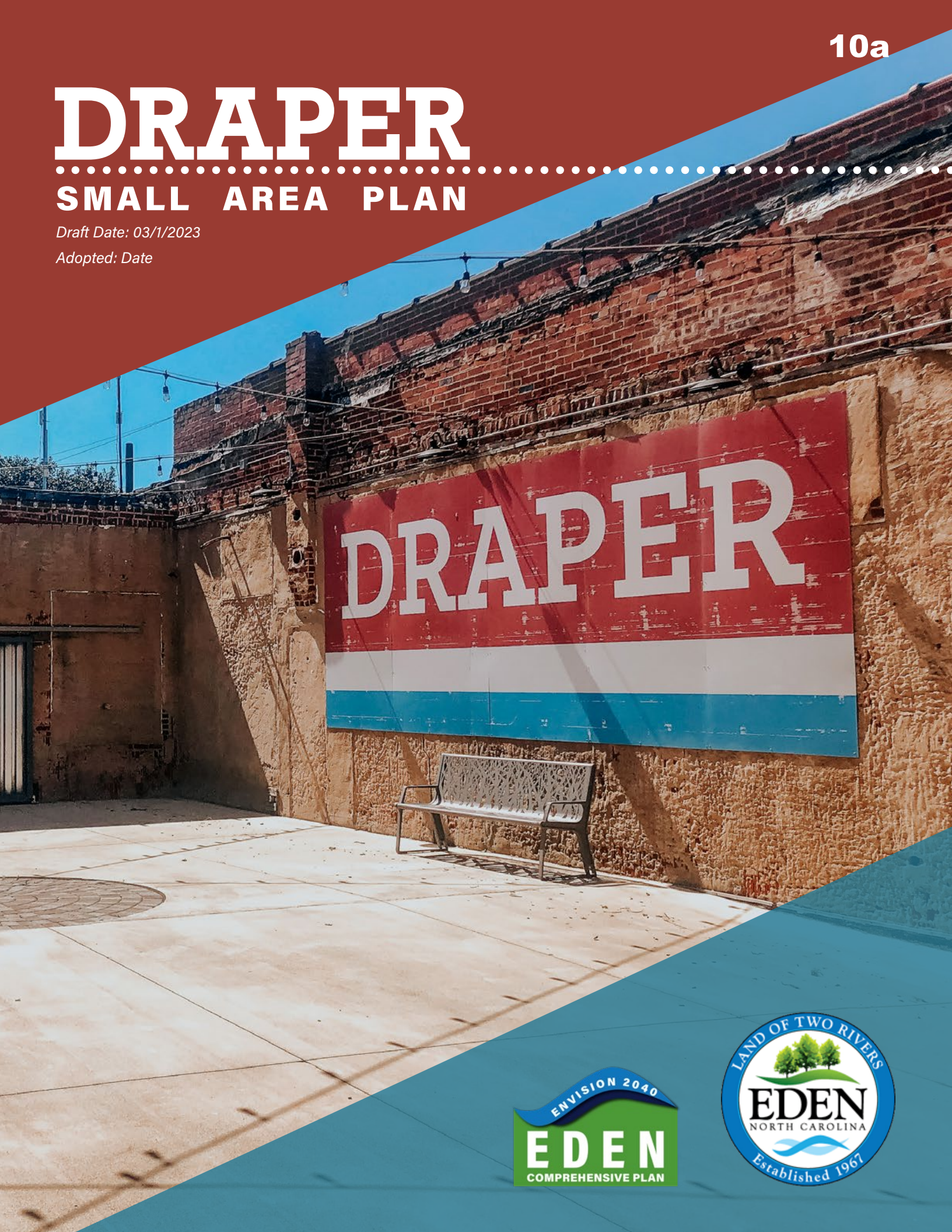


DRAPER

SMALL AREA PLAN

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Adopted: Date



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- » Neville Hall, Mayor
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- » Bruce Nooe
- » Kenny Kirkman
- » Jerry Epps
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SMALL AREA PLAN



Prepared with assistance from



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Introduction

The City of Eden developed separate towns and still retains three individual historic downtown areas. As a part of the larger Envision Eden Comprehensive Plan effort, a smaller study was developed specifically on the historic Downtown Leaksville. The Uptown Eden Small Area Plan (SAP) was the first of a series of anticipated small area plans for the City. This document is the second these plans.

Draper, like Leaksville and Spray, has its own character and identity due to the history of each developing has neighboring communities. While all are part of the City of Eden, each has a set of issues, assets, and concerns that may be similar in content, but differ in what is a priority. The Draper Small Area Plan will document these through the analysis process, and help to define the goals and priorities for Draper's future so that all stakeholders are working towards the same objectives.

Process

The process of creating this SAP largely followed the same process as the Uptown Eden Small Area Plan. The project team conducted an in-depth analysis focused on Draper, using mapping and demographic data, and listened to local residents and business owners through a survey, a public meeting, and site visits to create this set of tailored strategic recommendations for Draper.

Study Area

The study area for the plan was based on the 1963 municipal boundaries of Draper. It contains the area considered "downtown Draper", the surrounding historic neighborhoods, and the industrial area to the west. It borders key City features that include Freedom Park, the Dan River, and the Purina property.



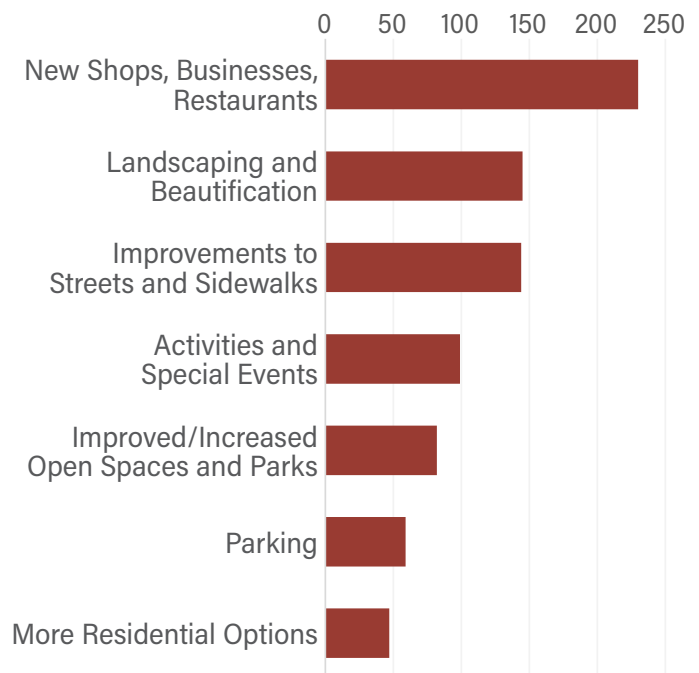
► The project team held a public meeting in August 2022 to get more perspective from Draper residents.

From the Eden Comprehensive Plan Survey:

What is the top priority you would like the Comprehensive Plan to accomplish or address?

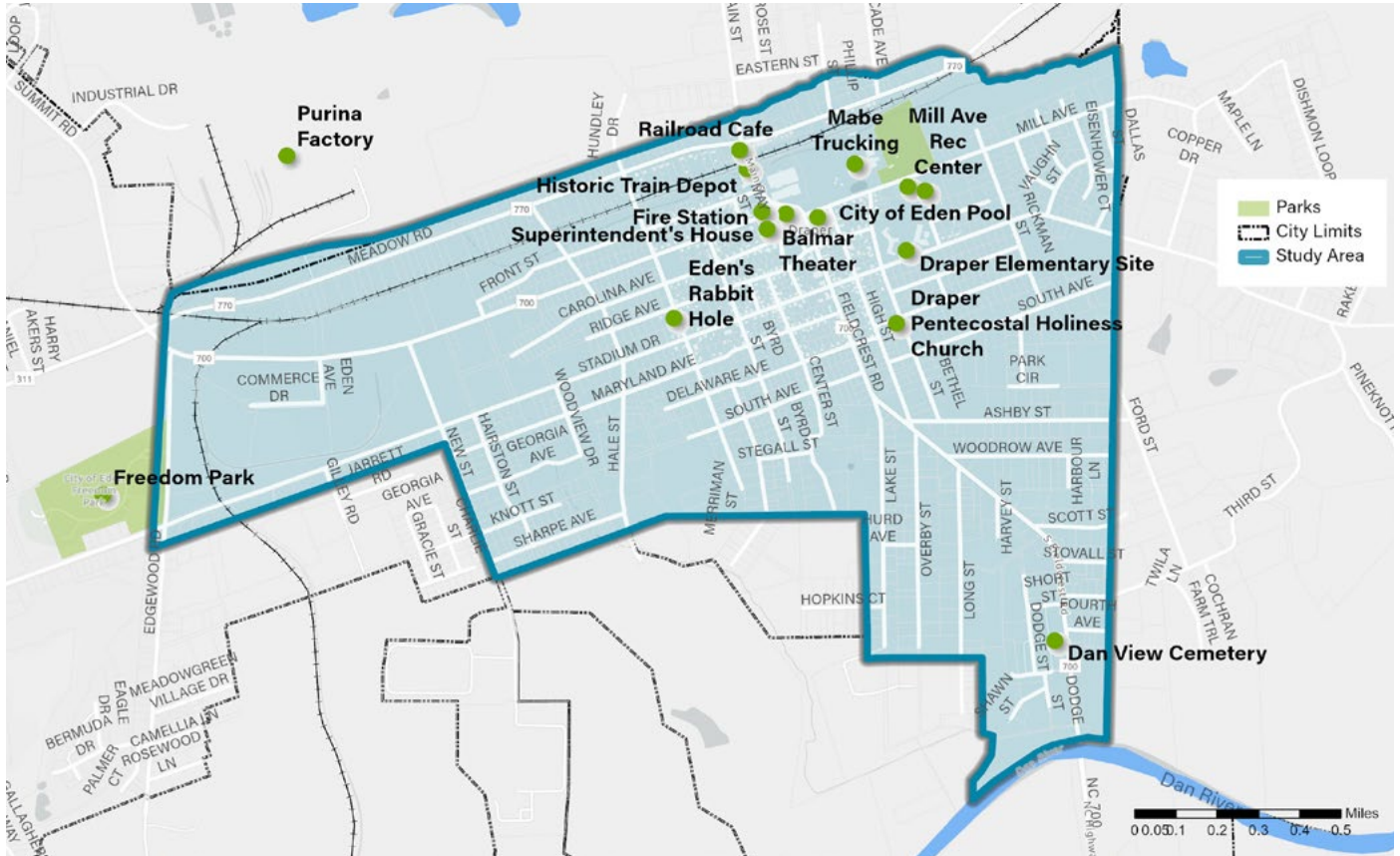
"Revitalize Draper. This historic area sits by the wayside because the community is poor. Taxes get poured into Leaksville. And bring back community recycling."

What improvement would you most like to see in Draper?



New businesses and beautification were the most desired improvements for Draper according to the community survey conducted during the Eden Comprehensive Plan.

Study Area Map and Draper Site Photos

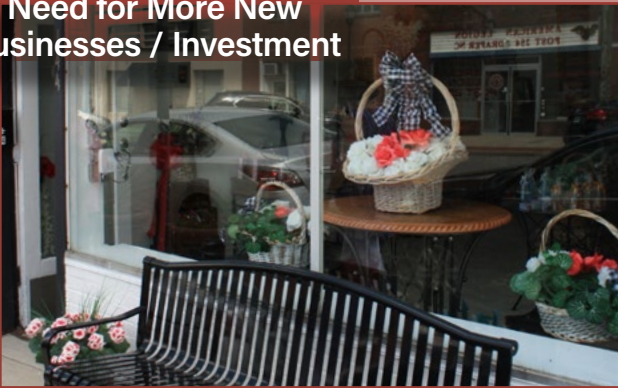


Issues

Property Maintenance



Need for More New Businesses / Investment



Streetscape / Pedestrian Improvements Needed



Safety Concerns

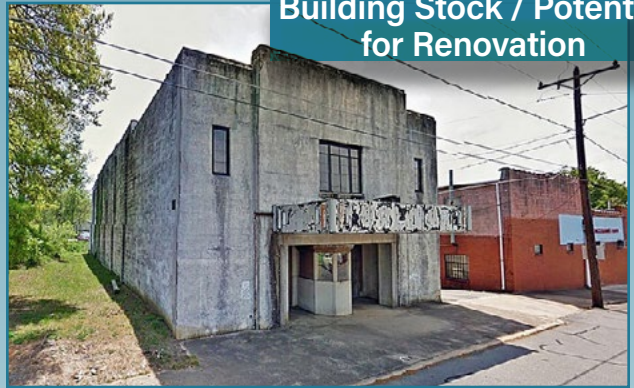


Opportunities

Public Events



Building Stock / Potential for Renovation



Purina Opening



Draper Elementary School Reuse



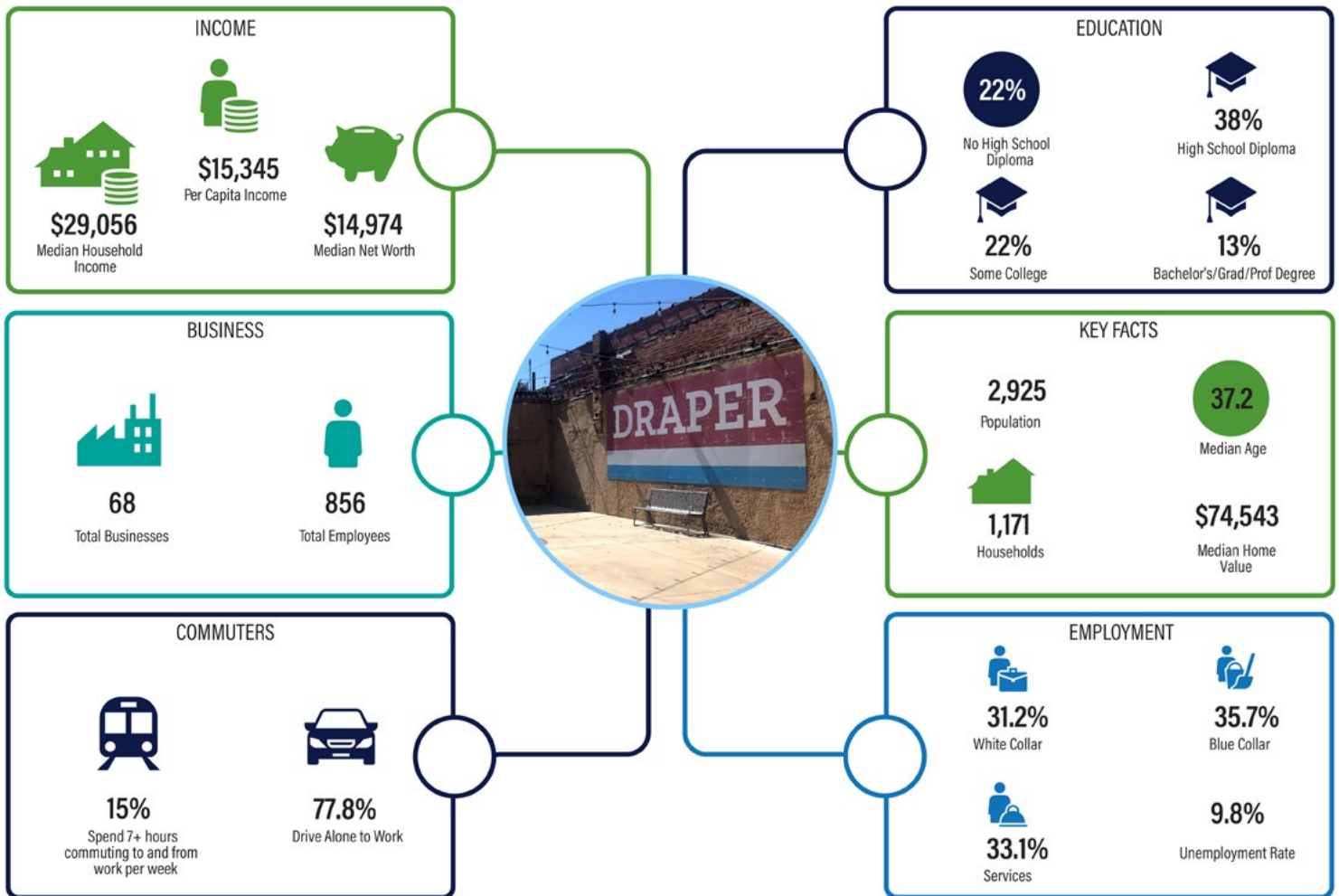
Demographics Narrative

The Draper area is lower income than the median income of Eden as a whole, with the City median household income of \$35,000 compared to the \$29,000. Draper residents make up 18.7% of the population within city limits and 14.7% of the population within the Eden ETJ (extraterritorial jurisdiction). The population is younger, on average, than the rest of Eden: the median age of Eden is 6 years older than that of Draper (37.2 years). The median home value is roughly \$13,000 less than the City median home value, however home

values in the area have been trending upward at 20% per year in the last five years (source: Redfin trends in zip code 27288, accessed December, 2022).

There are roughly 70 businesses operating in Draper as of 2020 with 850 employees working in the area. Nestlé Purina projects 300+ new jobs in Eden by the end of 2024. Although Purina is located just outside of the study area for Draper, it will likely have an impact by providing jobs and more daytime population to the area.

Study Area Demographics



Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri and Data Axle, Esri and GfK MRI, American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2021, 2026, 2015-2019.

Public Engagement Overview

The Small Area Plan was developed through in-depth conversations with community members, stakeholders, and City staff. Through a community survey and a public meeting input on issues and priorities for the Draper community helped to shape the recommendations in this plan.

Survey

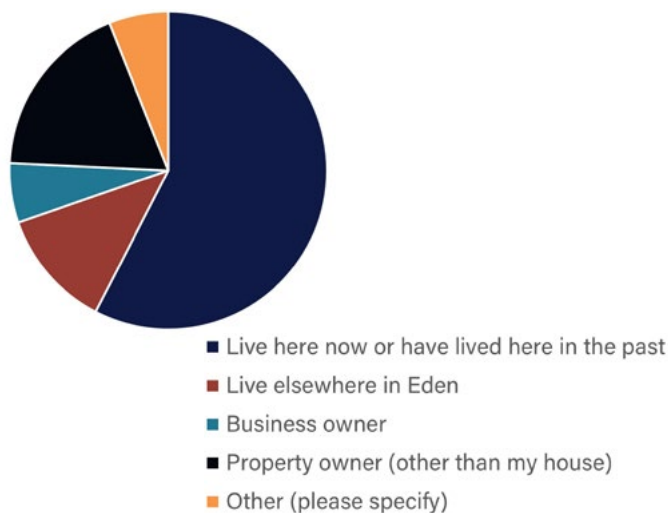
A short, 6- question survey ran through July 2022- September 2022. The community survey was available online and paper copies were available at various locations, including at the public meeting. Respondents were asked

to give input on their biggest priorities, with questions focused on development type, public space, and physical improvements to the Draper area. The survey was promoted on the Town's website, social media, and at the public meeting. Highlights from the results of the survey are included below.

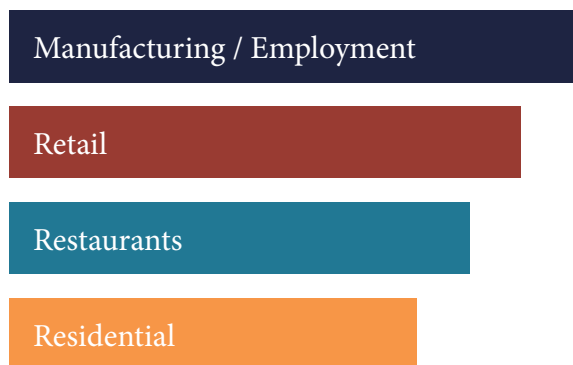
BIGGEST PRIORITIES



HOW DO YOU RELATE TO DRAPER?



DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCE



IMPROVEMENTS TO PUBLIC SPACES



PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS (open-ended responses)

Clean up downtown
 The railroad depot needs to be saved
 Incentivize business and property owners to improve/maintain their properties

Public Meeting Input

A public meeting was held on August 18, 2022 at Draper Christian Church and was well attended. Attendees participated in visioning and visual preference activities at the public meeting. The common themes from the meeting can be found below.

TOP PRIORITIES

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

New shops and businesses

Building renovations

Historic preservation/restoration

Street trees, lighting, landscaping

LAND USE/DEVELOPMENT

Restaurants

Retail

Offices

Single-family homes

PARKS IMPROVEMENTS AND PROGRAMMING

Greenways

Hiking and nature areas

Pollinator garden

Playground / nature play

"I love Draper, it's my home. I want to see Draper grow in businesses, good decent places to shop and eat."

COMMENT THEMES

- ▶ Remember and celebrate Draper's history
- ▶ Address property maintenance issues
- ▶ Downtown building renovations
- ▶ Increase number of businesses
- ▶ Increase lighting in downtown

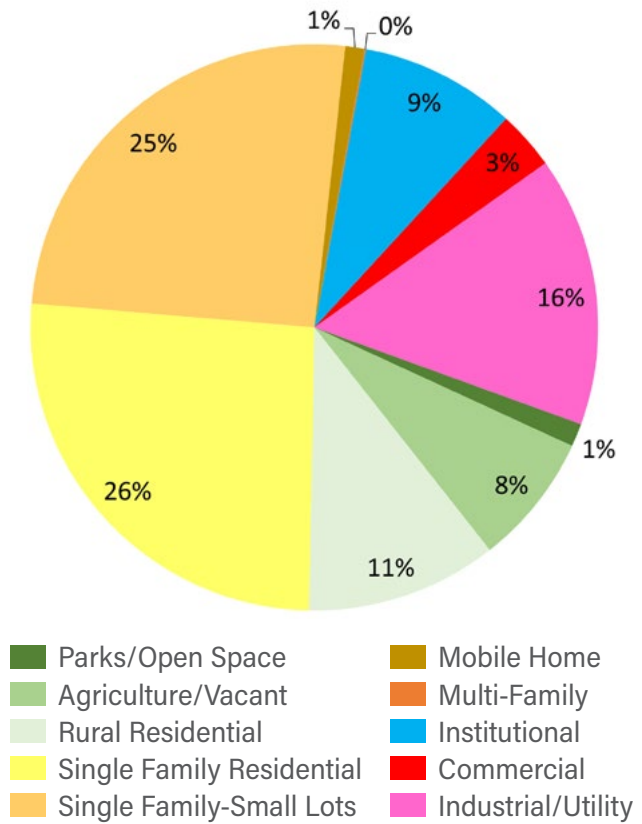


Analysis

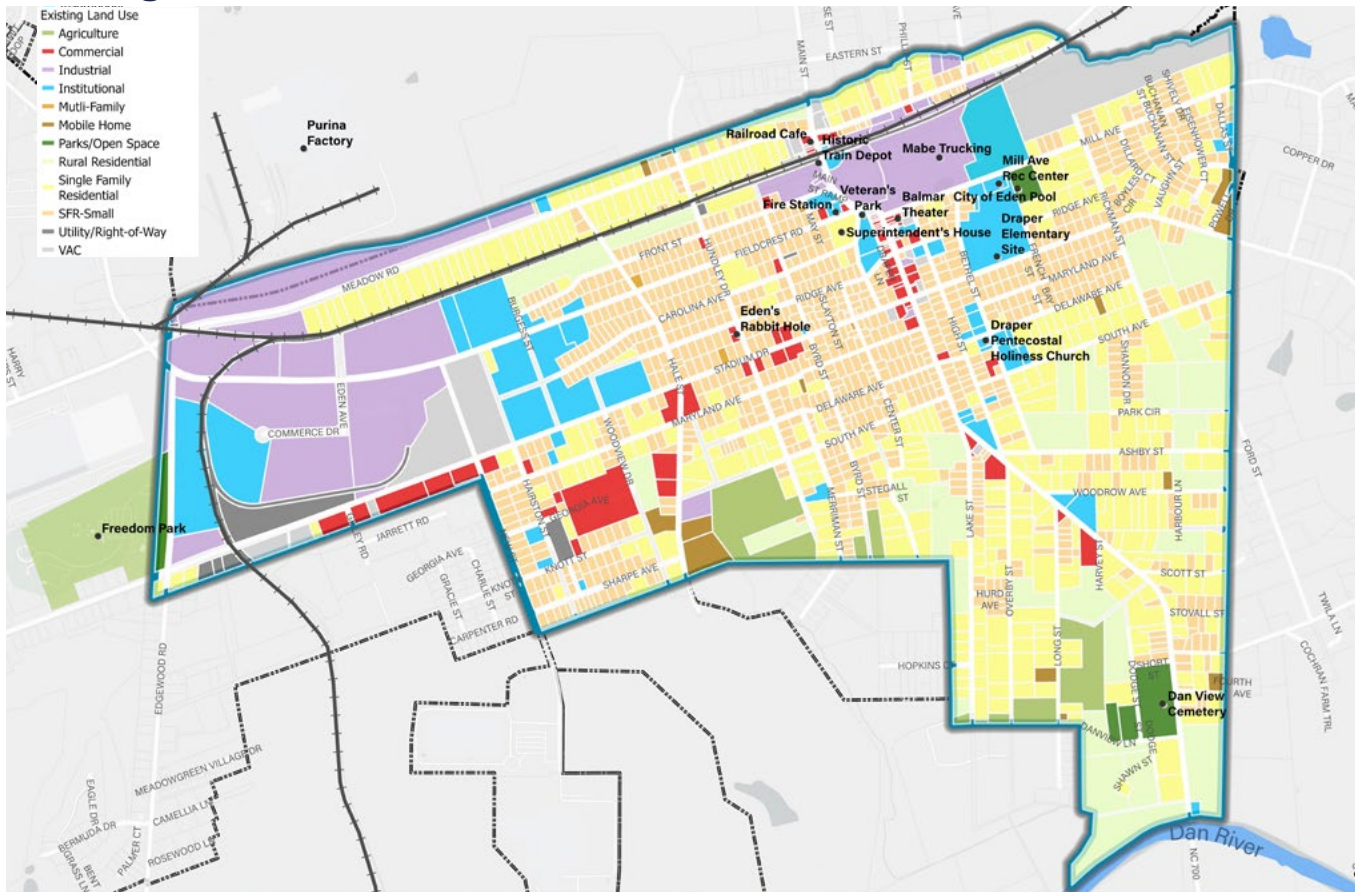
Existing Land Use

Draper has been one of the historical business centers for the City of Eden. Industrial, commercial and office uses occupy 28% of the land area. Many commercial areas date to Draper's time as an independent City, prior to the merger with Leaksville, Spray and the Metropolitan Sanitary District to form the City of Eden in 1967. Commercial uses are concentrated along Fieldcrest Road, east of Main Street, near the intersection of Main Street and Meadow Road and in a few commercial districts along and south of Stadium Drive. The former German-American Mill site is now occupied by Mabe Trucking. On the western end of the Study Area lies a number of large industrial businesses in the vicinity of Eden Avenue and Commerce Drive.

Existing Land Use Chart



Existing Land Use



Source: Rockingham County Tax Data 2022

Residential

Land uses transition to residential neighborhoods west and east of Fieldcrest Road. Residential uses occupy 63% of the land area. Historic mill houses line streets to the west of Main Street including areas along Front Street, Fieldcrest Road, Carolina Avenue and Ridge Avenue and west and east of Fieldcrest Road along Stadium Drive and Maryland Avenue. Homes in these areas were typically built between 1915 and 1940 and are generally situated on lots between one third an acre and one half an acre. Blocks are typically 350 ft deep with lots generally 90ft wide and 150ft deep. Side loaded homes are typical. Single family homes are generally single story and 1200-1500 square feet, although some larger structures exist, including the Superintendents House (a historic home on a hill overlooking Main Street) and some attached residential and apartments. There are a number of vacant parcels in south and east Draper that could accommodate additional residential development.

Business Activity and Events

The Draper Area Merchants Association meets monthly and coordinates events such as Shagging on Fieldcrest. Data from Esri indicates there are a total of 68 businesses in the study area that employ 856 employees. Long-time businesses in the study area include Drapers Cycle, the Railroad Cafe and Mabe Trucking. Relatively new businesses include Purlina's Gift Baskets and the Mustard Seed Cafe and Catering Company. Nestle recently bought the nearby Miller Brewing factory and is doing extensive renovations and expansions. During the development of the recent Comprehensive Plan many residents and business owners expressed concern about the use of downtown buildings for storage.

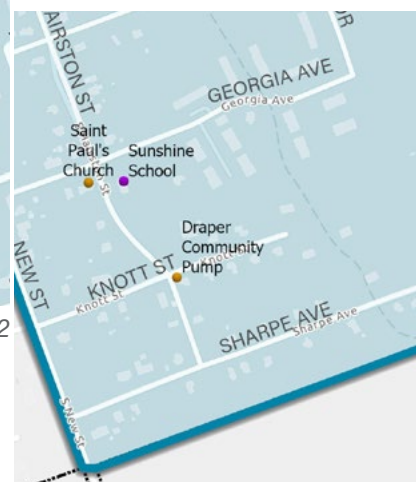
History and Resources

Draper began as a model mill village founded by the Marshall Field Company in 1905. Arthur Draper was the original architect. The original boundaries were the railroad on the north,

Historic Resource Map



Source: North Carolina Historic Preservation Office 2022



Virginia Avenue to the south, Byrd Street to the west, and Church Street to the east. The German-American Co. built a large textile mill in the area of Draper called "The Meadows." There were two stores and a Baptist Church by 1906. The Danville and Western railway depot was constructed in 1907. The Marshall Field and Company acquired the local mill in 1911. Afterward, the Town of Draper grew rapidly until the depression. A new building phase began after the depression in 1937. In 1967, the residents of Draper, Leaksville, and Spray voted to consolidate their towns into one city-- the City of Eden.

Downtown Draper was study listed in 2005 and includes approximately 20 structures, including the Draper Depot, Balmar Theater, and Draper Teacherage. The study list is a preliminary step in reviewing potential nominations for the National Register of Historic Places; this process screens out properties that are clearly not eligible.

The first store in Downtown Draper served as a market through which Rockingham Land Company sold their beef to feed construction worker of the mill. By 1920, Draper had acquired a school and Y.M.C.A., new churches, a welfare building, and new businesses. By the late 1930s, the Y.M.C.A. opened a theater that accommodated up to 350 people.

The African American community known as Jamestown was located on the southwest side of town, known as Jamestown. The African American community had their own schools and churches. Many people in this community worked for Marshall Field in various jobs.

The Draper area includes 3 locally significant landmarks: Draper Elementary School (2006), Sunshine School (2006), the Superintendent's house (1985). There are many homes in the area that have been surveyed but are not on the National Register of Historic Places and/or have not been deemed locally significant.



► Draper Plaza was created recently and serves as a public space for events in Downtown Draper.

Transportation Infrastructure and Public Space

The City of Eden has been active in improving the Draper area. In 2012 sidewalks with brick banding were installed along with stamped concrete crosswalks and other streetscape improvements. Additionally recent infrastructure improvements include resurfacing and striping of Draper Lane just west of Fieldcrest Road, Mill Avenue resurfacing, improvements to Carolina Avenue, Delaware Avenue and water and sewer upgrades. The city also created a plaza in Draper by purchasing a building, demolishing the interior but preserving the façade to create a public space that is used for events and by residents.

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Good sidewalks exist along Fieldcrest Rd between Main Street and Ridge Avenue. South of Ridge Avenue intermittent sidewalks are present, but large driveways, power poles and low curbs in need of maintenance make walking less comfortable. Sidewalks exist on a few east/west streets including Carolina Avenue and Ridge Avenue. Sidewalk connections have been proposed in the recent Pedestrian Plan (2021) along Front Street, Fieldcrest Road and Hundley Drive. The Parks and Recreation Plan showed trail and greenway connections west to Freedom Park and Spray and south to the Dan River.

Natural Resources and Parks

Draper is located in a relatively flat area between Dry Creek which runs eastward, parallel to the railroad and the Dan River to the south. A few tributaries extend upstream from Dry Creek and the Dan River into neighborhoods. Many of the residential area

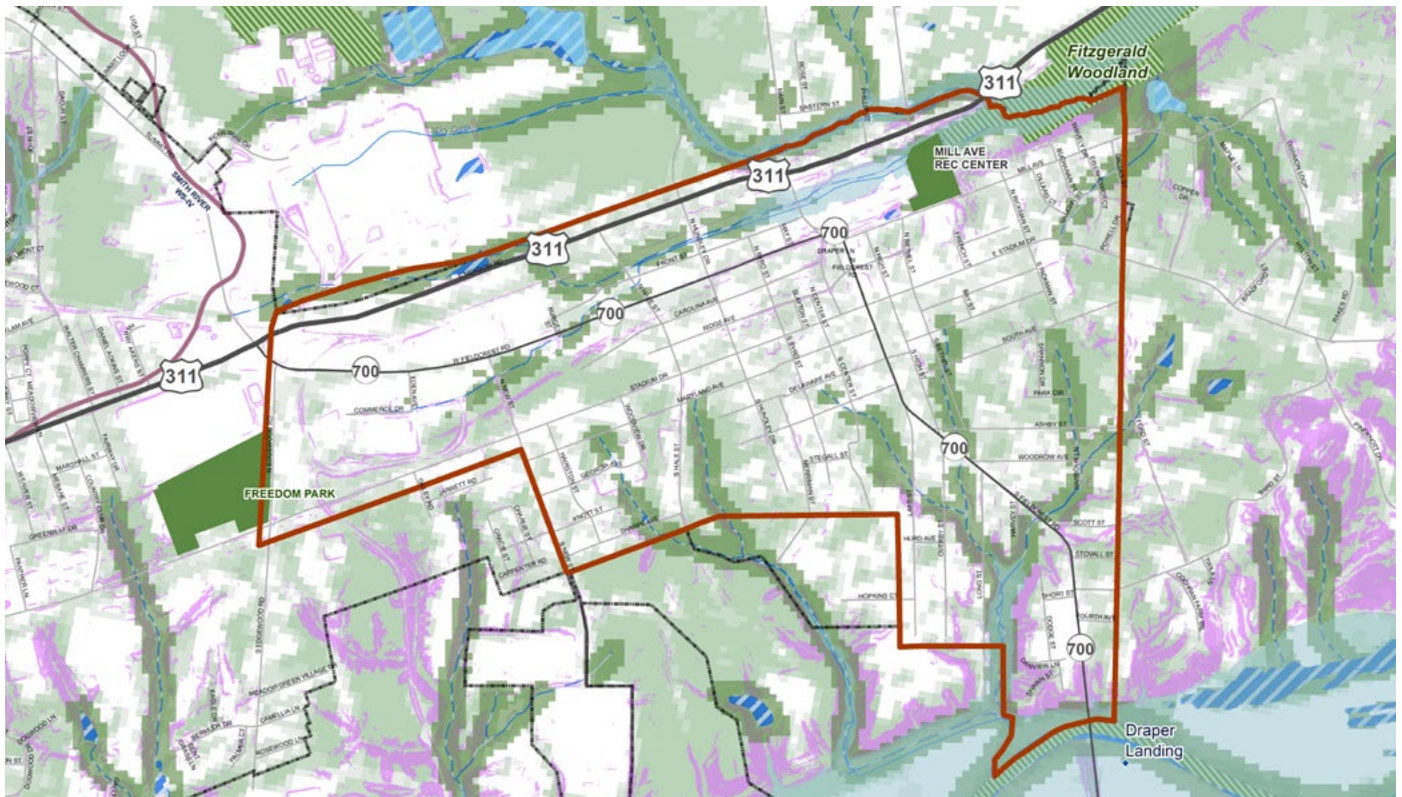
east and west of downtown Draper have mature trees on their interior. Many undeveloped areas exist with larger blocks of tree canopy to the southwest and east of the study area. A large floodplain extends on either side of the Dan River. A linear floodplain is also located along Dry Creek. Steep slopes are located along tributaries and to the southeast of Draper .unt.

The City of Eden maintains a number of parks and recreation facilities in the Draper area including:

- » Mill Avenue Recreation Center
- » City of Eden Pool
- » Draper Plaza
- » Draper Landing

There are plans to expand Draper Landing to include a better boat access and ramp on the Dan River, south of Draper.

Natural Resources Map



Recommendations

These recommendations for Draper are based on the analysis and stakeholder input.

Small Area Plan Goals

- Encourage activities, visitation and investments in the community.**
- Support businesses downtown and in key areas.**
- Focus code enforcement to address building and property maintenance.**
- Study and implement infrastructure and neighborhood improvements.**
- Celebrate and tell the history of the Draper community.**



Activities, Visitation and Safety

▶ Events

Continue supporting events in Downtown Draper.

- The City of Eden can help support events in Draper by continuing to coordinate between departments, advertising, and improving infrastructure to support events.
- Track event participation and attendance and use the data to improve events and prioritize public improvements.

▶ Wayfinding

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

- Additional signage should be added to clearly guide visitors to parking areas.

▶ Parking

Upgrade the existing public parking lot which is located just east of Fieldcrest Road and accessed via North High Street.

- Improvements should include resurfacing and restriping parking lot, adding handicap spaces and signage and directional signage to the parking lot and to businesses.

▶ Lighting and Safety

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

- Consider extending the pedestrian-oriented decorative lampposts farther south on Fieldcrest Road (i.e. from Ridge Road to just south of Stadium Drive).

Coordinate with the City of Eden Police Department to conduct regular patrols near commercial and recreation areas.

- Specific concerns were voiced during the planning process about suspected criminal activity on Stadium Drive and trespassing at the City of Eden Pool.

Land Use and Investment

▶ Code Enforcement and Junk Properties

Continue and expand enforcement of local ordinances for residential and commercial properties.

Consider additional regulations that discourage vacant buildings in downtown Draper.

Increase focused code enforcement efforts.

- Priorities include building maintenance in Downtown Draper and removal of junk cars and litter from residential properties along primary roads including Stadium Drive, Meadow Road and Fieldcrest Road.

▶ Building Maintenance and Upfit

Encourage adaptive reuse of the existing building stock.

Administer and pursue grants for home improvements in aging residential areas.

- Utilize the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for Neighborhood Revitalization for sidewalk and drainage improvements and housing rehabilitation in the Draper areas.

- Provide information to homeowners on available weatherization assistance grants (i.e. North Carolina's Weatherization Assistance Program (NCWAP).

- Pursue additional federal and state grants for assistance to homeowners.

Utilize incentives for businesses and building owners to encourage investment in Draper.

- Encourage use of City facade and building rehab grant programs in Draper.

▶ Infill and Redevelopment

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

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

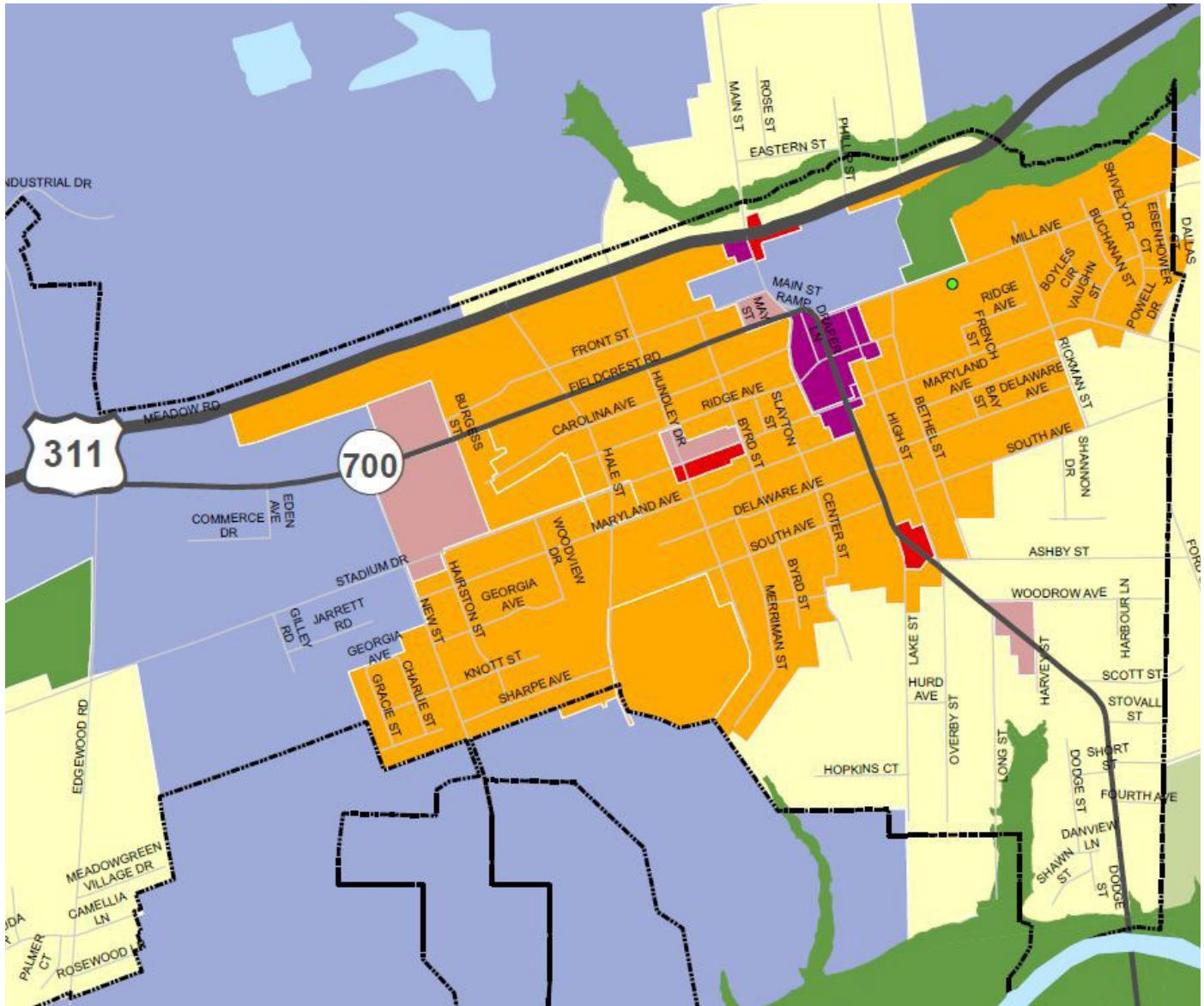
Encourage building and site design that honors the form, scale and character of Draper.

- Most commercial uses should be located downtown, in existing industrial areas and/or on key roadways such as Meadow Road, Fieldcrest Road, and Stadium Drive.



- ▶ Events such as Shagging on Fieldcrest and the annual Draper Christmas Parade bring people together and help local businesses.

Future Land Use



Future Land Use

- Parks and Open Space (OS)
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Suburban Residential (SR)
- Traditional Neighborhood (TN)
- Transitional (TR)
- Town Center (TC)
- Corridor Commercial (CC)
- Employment Center (EC)

► The Future Land Use Map from the City of Eden Comprehensive Plan, shown above, makes recommendations related to land use and development in the Draper area. The map shows areas where nonresidential uses, such as commercial, retail, office and industrial should be concentrated (primarily in the Town Center, Corridor Commercial, Transitional and Employment Center areas). The Future Land Use Map also shows residential areas with different characters. The Traditional Neighborhood areas in Draper include the residential mill village and older residential areas located on grid streets. In these areas density of 4-8 units per acre is appropriate with mix of single family and house-scale attached residential. The Suburban Residential area shows where new neighborhoods of less than 4 dwelling units per acre are appropriate.

- Residential uses should be mostly single family homes, although attached residential may be acceptable in some areas. For instance, some residential over commercial or stand alone multi-family buildings are appropriate in Town Center and Transitional Areas on the Future Land Use Map from the City of Eden Comprehensive Plan. Also in Traditional Neighborhood areas some small-scale attached residential is appropriate, especially on corner lots and as a transition from commercial to residential uses.

► Residential

Increase and diversify housing options within Draper through rezoning decisions and targeted amendments to the zoning ordinance.

- Consider rezonings from the R12 zoning district to NMX or R-6 to allow for attached residential in areas shown as Town Center and Transitional on the Future Land Use Map in the Eden Comprehensive Plan.
- Consider amending lot width minimums in R12. This process could include an accounting of nonconforming lots and then the creation of solution that addresses the majority of nonconformities.
- Consider text amendments or a new district to allow for smaller lots and house-scale multi-family in some areas. The current R-6 zoning district not ideal because it allows manufactured homes which are not recommended in Draper.

Encourage investment in new residential units.

- Encourage residential-over-commercial, townhomes, house-scale multifamily (including triplexes and quadplexes)



- This house-scale apartment built in the 1970s is located on a prominent corner south of downtown Draper. It is an example of "missing middle housing" that can provide a mix of housing types while preserving the character of neighborhoods.

Business Support

► Support Local Businesses

Coordinate regularly with the Draper Merchants' Association and property owners to identify priority issues.

Track progress on recommendations in the Draper Small Area Plan.

- Create an annual meeting or report to discuss and track public and private investment and recent successes and challenges in the area.

► Recruit New Businesses to the Draper Area

Explore incentives and partnerships with organizations or businesses that fulfill community needs.

- Priorities expressed during the planning process include new restaurants, shops, a bank and a grocery store.

Parks and Community Assets

► Public Spaces

Prioritize improvements to Draper Elementary School and the grounds.

- Consider reuse of building for an after school program, gym space, pickleball courts, incubator space and/or classes.
- Study potential improvements to the grounds including upgrades to the playground equipment and baseball field.
- Additional improvements that should be considered include improving sight visibility, landscaping, as well as adding parking and vehicular access south of the Mill Avenue Recreation Center.

Study feasibility of the addition of public restrooms at Draper Plaza.

Enhance public spaces throughout Draper.

- Increase sidewalk width where possible (consider widening sidewalks and/or the addition of bulb-outs at intersections to slow traffic)
- Study the feasibility of enhancing existing public spaces (i.e. the Veterans Memorial).

► Gateways and Beautification

Maintain and enhance plantings.

- Incorporate additional plantings including colorful flowers, ornamental grasses and trees where possible. Plant selections should feature low-maintenance varieties and native plants. Opportunities include city-owned lands and street rights-of-way.

Improve access to nearby natural assets.

- Enhance sidewalk and greenway connections to Draper, including connections west to the Smith River Greenway and south to the Dan River.



- The City of Eden recently acquired the Draper Elementary School. Plans for building upgrades and reuse are underway. A concept showing ideas for site improvements and programming is included on page 20.

History

► Celebrate Draper's history.

Work with the Historic Preservation Commission on locations of historical markers.

- Historical markers highlight objective facts about an area's past; markers can include plaques or sidewalk markers.

Work with the Historic Preservation Commission and the community to designate local landmarks.

- See LU 10.1 in the City of Eden's Comprehensive Plan

Hold a public meeting to educate property owners/developers about available tax credits related to historic preservation and affordable housing.

▶ **Draper Train Depot**

Work to preserve and restore the Draper Depot.

- Encourage rehabilitation and appropriate reuse as a business.
- Consider pursuing grant funds to purchase, restore and/or move the Depot. Coordination with current owner will be necessary.

▶ **Balmar Theater**

Encourage the preservation and reuse of the Balmar Theater.

- Encourage the pursuit of grant funds to assist in the restoration of the Theater.
- Coordinate with property owners in the vicinity to determine opportunities for infill development and reuse of the theater.

▶ **Sunshine School (Rosenwald School)**

Develop partnerships with community organizations and determine ways to tell the history of the African American community in Draper.

- Seek out opportunities to celebrate the significant history of the Draper Sunshine School and restoration and/or reuse of the campus.

▶ **Draper Community Well**

Consider a marker or other improvements to designate historic Draper Community Well / Pump

- This historic feature is located at the corner of Hairston Street and Knott Street a block away from the Sunshine School.

LOCAL LANDMARK DESIGNATIONS

Local landmark designations are eligible to apply for an annual 50% property tax deferral as long as the property's important historic features are maintained.

▶ **Draper Elementary**

- Consider utilizing wings of the elementary school to fulfill the community's needs.
- Engage with the community to develop plans and programming for the elementary school

▶ **Mill Village**

- Hold additional public meetings with property owners in the mill village to determine shared needs of residents and property owners.
 - » Discussions could include priorities for grants and ways to encourage investment while maintaining the existing character. Options could include a character overlay or local historic district.

▶ **Old Mill Site**

- Seek out opportunities for historical marker locations (in public ROW, along new trails/greenways) about the history of the "The Meadows" textile mill.



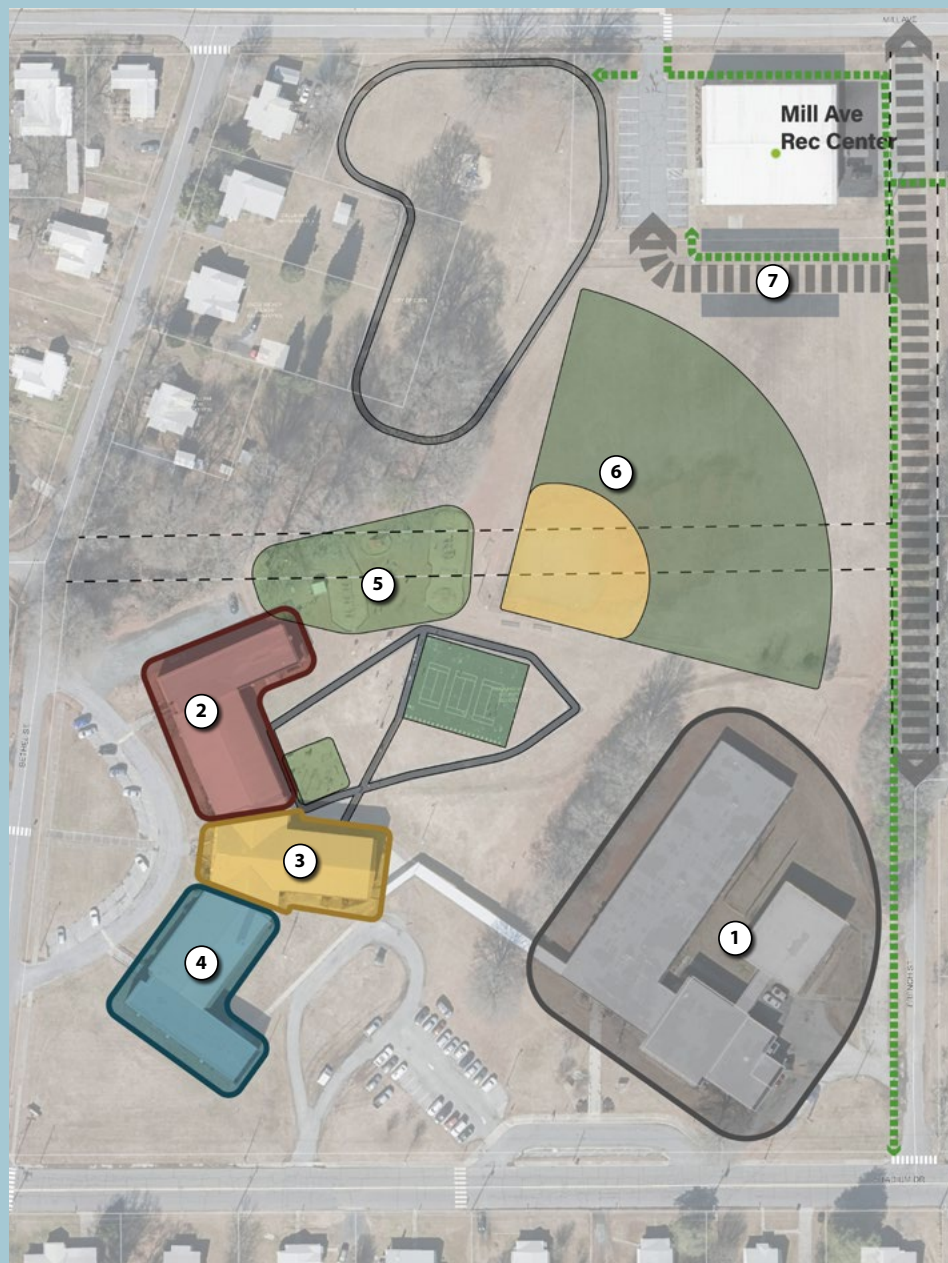
- ▶ Candidates for local landmark designation include the Draper Depot, Balmar Theater and other historic structures in the area.

OPTIONS FOR REUSE OF DRAPER ELEMENTARY

A New Community Asset.

The Draper Elementary School was recently acquired by the City of Eden from Rockingham County Schools. This school will continue to be an asset to the Draper community. The building on the east side of the property is anticipated to continue to be a Head Start center. The building on the western side of the property needs to be renovated and could be programmed as a combination of things to serve the community. More work is needed to determine uses, but ideas include an after school program, "gymnasium" with pickleball courts, and incubator and classroom space. Outdoor spaces could also be improved, as well as access from the School to the Mill Avenue Rec Center.

Reuse Diagram



Potential Site Elements

- ① Head Start Center (Existing)
- ② After School Program
- ③ "Gymnasium" with Pickleball Courts
- ④ Incubator Space and Classrooms
- ⑤ Upgrade Playground
- ⑥ Upgrade Ball Field
- ⑦ Access Improvements and Additional Parking

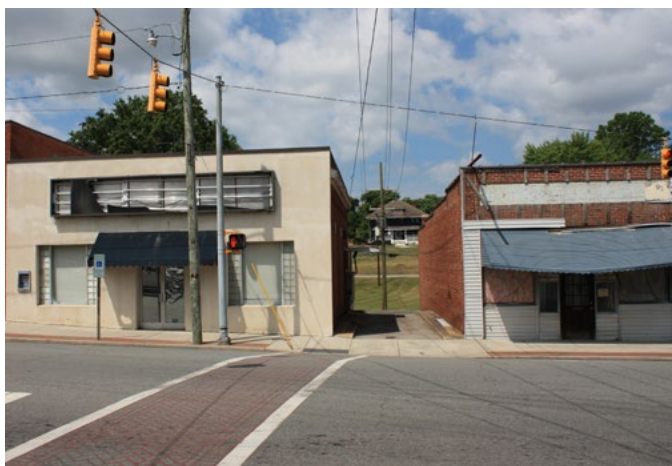
Transportation and Infrastructure

▶ Streetscape and Pedestrian Improvements

Refresh crosswalks in Downtown Draper.

Study the extension of streetscape improvements south along Fieldcrest Road from their current terminus at Ridge Avenue to Stadium Drive.

- Stadium Drive is a primary entryway into downtown Draper. Streetscape improvements could include sidewalk improvements, access management and the addition of lighting and landscaping where feasible.
- A streetscape study should be conducted to determine feasibility and conceptual plan for improvements. This study should also include coordination with businesses and landowners to determine priorities and constraints.



▶ Left: The City of Eden has invested in previous street improvements in Downtown Draper including the addition of furnishings, pedestrian lighting, wide sidewalks with brick banding and crosswalks along Fieldcrest Road in 2012. The existing improvements extend from Main Street along Fieldcrest Road, south to Ridge Avenue.

▶ Right: South of Ridge Avenue travel lanes widen, on-street parking and sidewalks are inconsistent. Streetscape improvements could include sidewalk improvements, access management and the addition of pedestrian lighting and landscaping where feasible.

Pursue state and federal grants to improve streets in the Draper Area.

▶ Sidewalks

Inventory and address ADA issues in Downtown Draper and at Mill Avenue Park and Recreation Center.

Prioritize projects to address sidewalk gaps as identified in the Eden Pedestrian Plan.

▶ Trash and Recycling

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

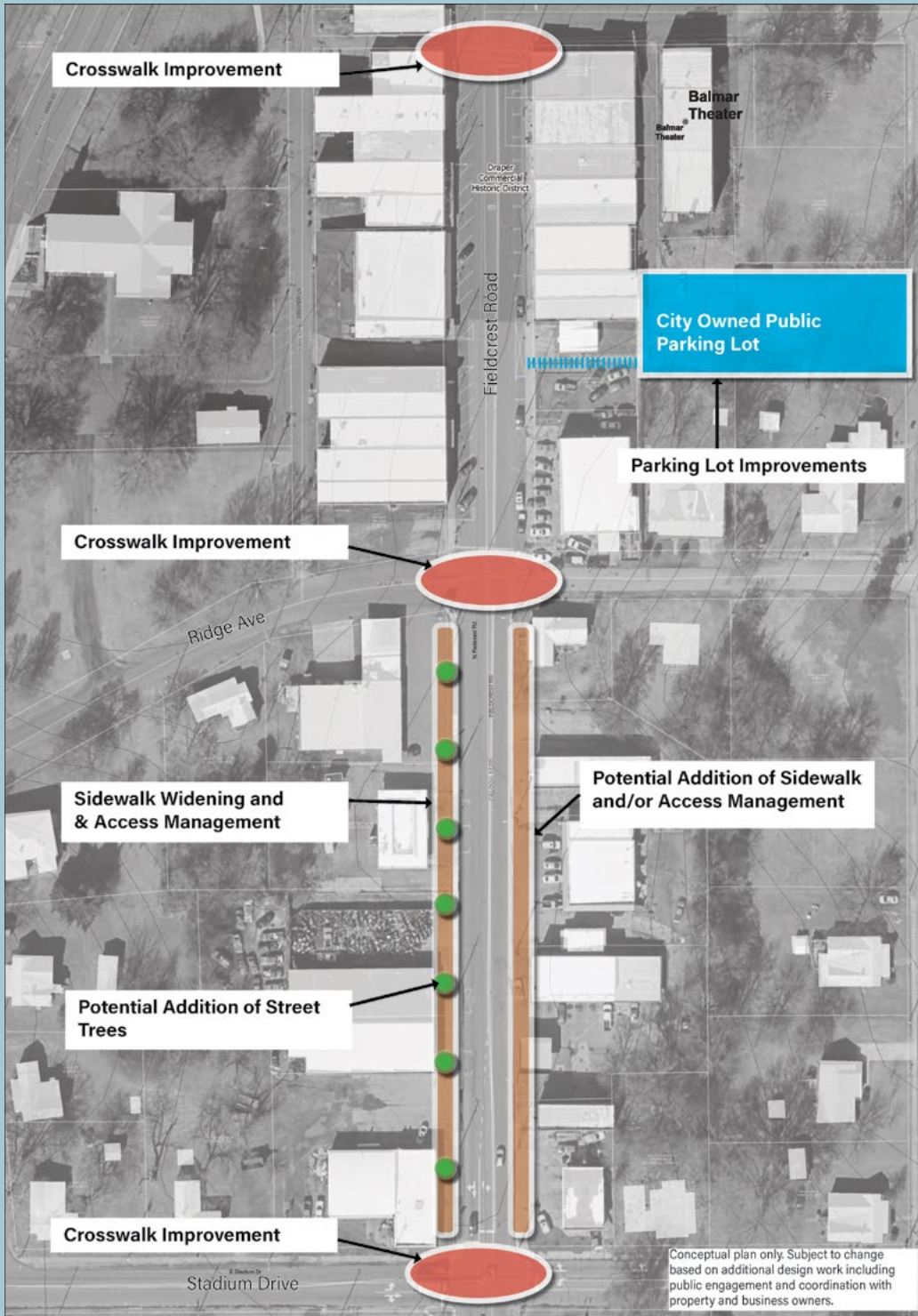
▶ Fire Station

Continue planned upgrades to City of Eden Draper Fire Station.



DOWNTOWN DRAPER STREETScape CONCEPT

Pedestrian and beautification improvements are needed south of Ridge Avenue in Draper. These could include crosswalk improvements, sidewalk widening, access management and the addition of lighting and landscaping where feasible.



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