



AGENDA

**CITY OF LENOIR
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
905 WEST AVENUE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024
6:00 P.M.**



I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Moment of Silence & Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Presentation: Andrew Gale, DLR Group will present a review of the Downtown Master Plan to City Council.

II. MATTERS SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

III. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Minutes: Approval of the minutes of the City Council meeting of Tuesday, January 16, 2024 as submitted.
- B. Minutes, Closed Session: Approval of the closed session minutes of the City Council meeting of Tuesday, January 16 as reviewed by the City Council, City Manager and the City Attorney.
- C. Bid Award; Old Lenoir High Roof Replacement Project: Staff recommends City Council award the low bid of \$233,375.00 to Barger-Ashe Roofing as the lowest responsible bidder for the Old Lenoir High School Roof Replacement Project.
- D. Resolution; BRIC Grant: Staff recommends approval by resolution to designate agents to seek funding for the BRIC grant for the City of Lenoir Resilient Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure Project. This designation is part of the application process. Note: Additional background information is available on the council action form included in the agenda packet.

IV. REQUESTS AND PETITIONS OF CITIZENS

V. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

VI. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CITY MANAGER

- A. Items of Information
 - 1. The ABC Board will meet on Thursday February 8 at 2:00 p.m.
 - 2. The Lenoir Business Advisory Board will meet on Thursday, February 8 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, Third Floor.
 - 3. The City/County Services Committee will meet on Monday, February 12 at noon.
 - 4. The Economic Development Advisory Committee will meet on Tuesday, February 13 at 8:15 a.m.
 - 5. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will meet on Monday, February 19 at 6:00 p.m. at Mulberry Recreation Center.
 - 6. City Council will conduct a Budget Retreat on Friday, February 23 at 8:00 a.m. at the J. E. Broyhill Civic Center.

B. Items for Council Action

1. Resolution; Downtown Master Plan: Approval of a resolution to adopt the Downtown Master Plan Update with DRL Group/McGill Associates as submitted.

VII. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

VIII. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MAYOR

IX. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILMEMBERS

X. ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF LENOIR DOWNTOWN PLAN



 **DLR GROUP**

JANUARY 2024
LENOIR, NC



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INTRODUCTION

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Block on West Main, Lenoir, N.C. (1912). UNC Libraries, Durwood Barbour Collection of North Carolina Postcards. Flickr.



West Avenue (n.d.). Our State Magazine.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Lenoir, NC is home to some of the greatest legends of manufacturing. Long recognized as a furniture hub, Lenoir attracted buyers from around the world who wanted sneak peaks of the Broyhill, Fairfield, Bernhardt, and Kincaid Furniture companies' latest offerings. Today, the City's rich history is the foundation of its entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to craftsmanship and the arts. While furniture is still an essential piece of what defines Lenoir, the community is also home to dozens of small restaurants and businesses (including a meadery, a brewery, a salt cave, and a cat café), as well as a Google Data Center, Exela Pharma Sciences, and Caldwell Memorial Hospital. It cannot be argued: there is something special about Lenoir and, as some might say, the community is only just getting started.

With that in mind, the City of Lenoir and Downtown Lenoir have set out to complete the city's first Downtown Plan (the Plan). With a population of over 18,300 in the 2020 Census, and as the seat of Caldwell County, the City is positioned for success. While organic growth has taken Lenoir's Downtown so far, the time has come for a more deliberate strategy that will outline a people-centered approach for future growth and vitality, both of which will be essential to the community's future. Channeling Lenoir's spirit of reinvention, the following plan is intended to build on Lenoir's current momentum, considering recent public and private investments while also rooting the plan in Lenoir's artistic, cultural, entrepreneurial, and innovative spirits.

Downtown Lenoir Main Street Program

Downtown Lenoir Main Street Program (Downtown Lenoir/DLMSt) is a North Carolina Main Street community, designated by the N.C. Department of Commerce Main Street and Rural Planning Center. Accredited by Main Street America, Downtown Lenoir's mission is to

"Guide and facilitate connections to resources that create a culture which powers growth Downtown, promotes diversity through engagement and inclusive design, and actively showcases the talents of this creative community which lives, works, and prospers in the beauty of a natural environment that inspires artisans and entrepreneurs and attracts the next generations of the creative class."

The program has received eight NC Department of Commerce Main Street Awards and was recently selected from hundreds of Main Street programs across the country to participate in the Women-Owned Business National Highlights Program. Downtown Lenoir is also a recipient of the NPS Main Street Façade Improvement Grant and a participant in the National Main Street/AARP Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Pilot Program.

With a staff of two and hundreds of volunteers, Downtown Lenoir is charged with serving the 16-block area of commercial and residential space that comprises the City of Lenoir's downtown. The organization does this through its support of local businesses, economic impact-generating activities and events, and contributions to Downtown beautification efforts. With the Downtown Plan, Downtown Lenoir hopes to spur additional investments in the Downtown, specifically in relationship to the Historic Lenoir High School (The Campus), building vacancies, and arts, culture, and creativity more generally.

Downtown Plan Purpose and Goals

A key goal of any downtown plan is to integrate a community's previous, ongoing, and planned future projects with research, analysis, and community input, resulting in a comprehensive, realistic, and action-oriented final plan. This plan does just that, combining an analysis of Lenoir's existing conditions with market data and feedback from a diverse cross-section of the City of Lenoir community, including business leaders, elected officials, and City staff members. The result is a guide for continued downtown revitalization and redevelopment for the next 10 years.

Included in the Plan are the rehabilitation efforts of the city-owned Historic Lenoir High School, which has been re-branded as The Campus. The Campus includes an auditorium, a gymnasium, the Harper Band Building, and the historic Mack Cook Stadium. It is contiguous to Downtown's Municipal Service District (MSD) and is located in the downtown commercial district. The Plan includes recommendations for the highest and best uses for the Harper Band Building, Masonry Building, and the Mack Cook Stadium and outbuildings.



NC Gravity Games 2022. (2022). Queen City News, via NC Science Festival.



Crowds on North Main Street during the 2022 North Carolina Blackberry Festival. (2022). City of Lenoir.

Ultimately, no plan is complete without a well-defined and clearly articulated vision and goals. The vision and goals outlined here were created in collaboration with Downtown Lenoir and the community and are intended to guide City investments toward strategic infrastructure and public spaces; spur additional investment in Downtown housing, commercial development, culture, and recreation; and serve as a policy and visual guide for the Downtown's growth.

Downtown Plan Vision

An action-oriented and comprehensive 10-year plan that is inclusive of the rehabilitation of The Campus.

Downtown Plan Goals

- Evaluate current land use and development regulations against current best practices/stated goals and make recommendations for amendments that are authorized by the statutes and address:
 - Permitted/special/prohibited uses
 - Vacant storefronts
 - Demolition through neglect
 - Architectural design standards for existing buildings that encourage appropriate treatment of historic facades
 - Standards for new construction on infill lots for mixed-use buildings that maintain community character and foster active street environments
- Evaluate existing public spaces/amenities and identify key areas for intervention/enhancements including:
 - Parking availability, location, cost, and enforcement
 - The use, design, and function of existing public spaces that enhance the connection to assets adjacent or close to the Downtown core (Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVT), Historic Walker Stadium, J.E. Broyhill Park, etc.)
 - Public sidewalks/accessibility improvements based on the recent ADA audit completed by the City
- Guide City investments toward strategic infrastructure and public spaces.
- Spur additional investment in Downtown housing, commercial development, culture, and recreation.
- Examine trends that impact development patterns in the community.

- Collaborate with stakeholders, working groups, and the Advisory Committee.
- Build on previous successes and ongoing initiatives, including identifying ways to leverage/capitalize on previous and future investments in public space.
- Prepare and assign implementation strategies to achieve goals and objectives.

Planning Process

The planning process was divided into four phases that included comprehensive, inclusive, and meaningful community and stakeholder engagement that helped inform and shape recommendations. This interactive, analytical, and consensus-based approach was geared toward addressing community needs and aspirations and enhancing the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the Plan on the City. Ultimately, this helped build consensus towards plan priorities and will enable future implementation.

The planning process phases are outlined below, followed by a brief summary of community engagement.

- **Phase 1: Project Initiation and Existing Conditions Analysis**
This phase included initial focus group and stakeholder interviews, data collection, a review of relevant plans and prior projects, analysis of existing conditions, and a broad community survey to understand planning opportunities and constraints.
- **Phase 2: Visioning and Initial Options Evaluation**
This phase included developing the Plan vision and goals as well as initial redevelopment options for the Downtown and The Campus that were based on the existing conditions analysis and community feedback. Market analysis and peer community benchmarking were also conducted during this phase.

- **Phase 3: Plan Development**

This phase included the selection of a preferred redevelopment option for the Downtown and The Campus based on feedback received in Phase 2. Policy and capacity recommendations to achieve the preferred redevelopment option were suggested and shared for community feedback.

- **Phase 4: Draft and Final Master Plan with Recommendations**

This phase included discussion of the draft Plan priorities and phasing recommendations. A final report and presentation were provided to the Committee of the Whole in advance of Plan adoption.

Community Outreach and Engagement

As indicated, community and stakeholder engagement were included as part of each planning phase. The consulting team, led by DLR Group, worked closely with the Downtown Lenoir team to plan engagement activities, find appropriate meeting locations, and communicate events to the broader community. Downtown Lenoir also worked with DLR Group on a project website that was created to provide additional information about the Plan to the public and to solicit feedback.

An Advisory Committee consisting of elected officials, various City commission members, and City staff; property and business owners; members of the public; and other stakeholders was engaged throughout the Plan's development. In addition, multiple Committee of the Whole and City leadership meetings were held to review the plan in progress and coordinate with the City's various ongoing projects and initiatives.

Findings from the engagement process are outlined in the Existing Conditions narrative.



Lenoir and Hibriten Mountain. (n.d.). Comprehensive Architectural Survey of the City of Lenoir.



Community Meeting, Martin Luther King Jr. Center. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.

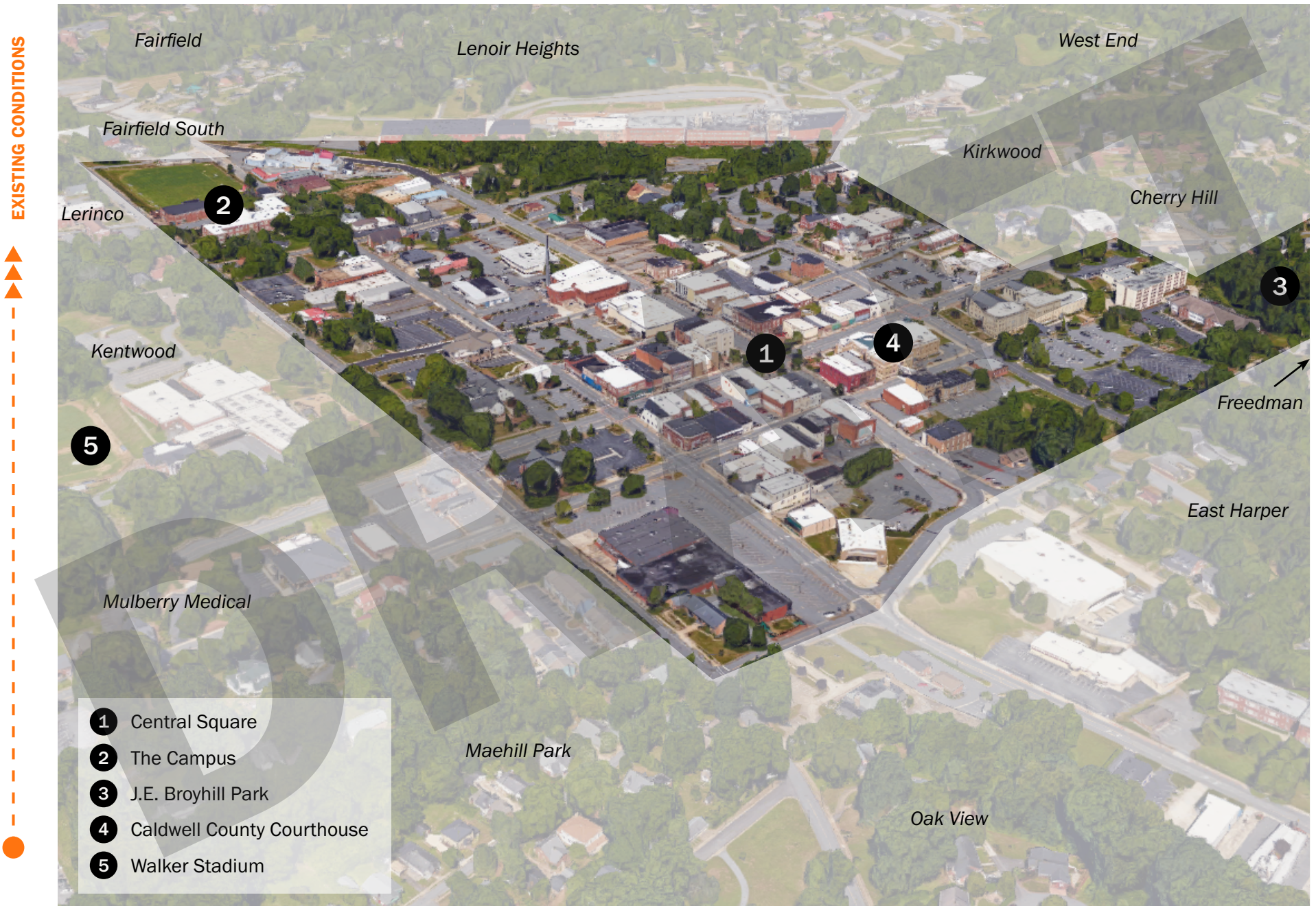


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EXISTING CONDITIONS

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Downtown Lenoir



EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Lenoir is the County seat, largest incorporated municipality, and only city in Caldwell County. It is centrally located, nestled between the Blue Ridge Mountains to the northwest and the Brushy Mountains to the east. U.S. Routes 321 and 64 intersect to the southeast of Downtown Lenoir, while Highway 64 runs southwest to northeast and connects Lenoir to Morganton and Wilkesboro. U.S. 321 runs southeast to northwest and connects Lenoir to Hickory, Blowing Rock, and Boone. Geographically, this positioning makes Lenoir the gateway to the mountains. The confluence of highways, however, has left it a bit of a drive-through community, with folks passing by on their weekend getaways and mountain vacations rather than stopping to explore.

Context and Surrounding Neighborhoods

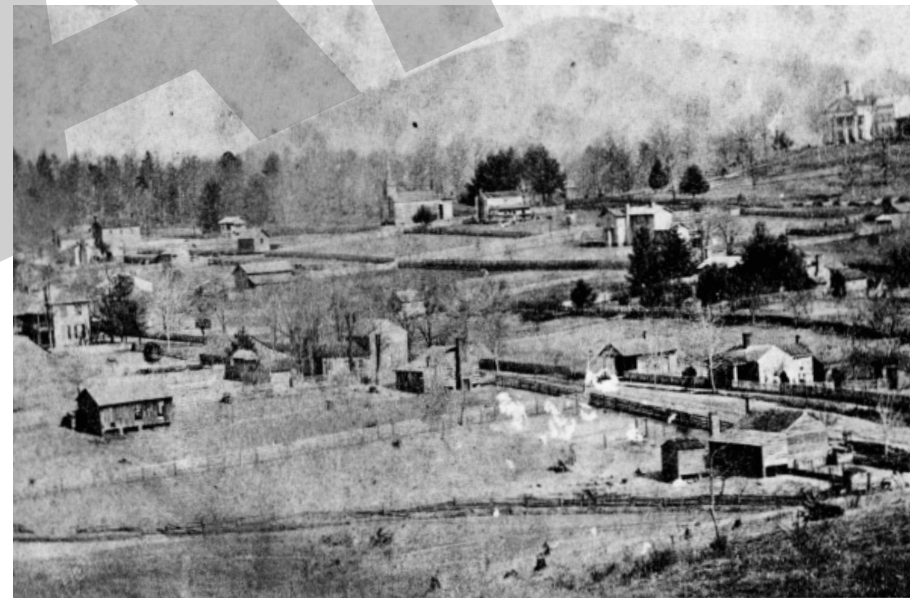
The neighborhoods surrounding Downtown developed along with Downtown and its industrial growth. In the late 1800s, the neighborhoods of Lenoir Heights became home to wealthier homeowners looking for vistas to Hibriten Mountain, Lerinco became home to workers at the mills, and Kirkwood once included single- and multi-family homes, a grocery store, and a hotel. Cherry Hill/North Main Street and Freedman experienced their greatest residential growth after 1920 following commercial growth along major corridors. Other residential neighborhoods, like Maehill Park and Kentwood, were platted and developed in the 1920s and 1930s, and some, like the West End, continued to develop through the 1950s and 1960s. Outside of Downtown, neighborhoods that historically had primarily industrial uses, like Mulberry Medical and Fairfield South, have few residential areas. Fairfield South, for example, features Blue Bell at Lenoir Mills, a former cotton mill that has been converted into housing, as well as an inactive historic Freight Train Depot (slated for future commercial use), the community garden, and a brownfield site. These neighborhoods create a number of entry points into the Downtown area. Most, however, suffer from poor signage and could benefit from increased beautification efforts.

Downtown Development

Early Settlement and Commercial Activity

Lenoir and the surrounding region have been settled for hundreds of years. The historic city of Joara, between present-day Lenoir and Morganton, was one of the largest in the Piedmont region and located along busy trading routes.¹ The area was settled by Mississippian-culture, Cherokee, and Catawba peoples at the time of European settlement in the 1560s (by the Spanish, briefly) and 1760s (by the English colonists).²

Colonists, primarily farmers from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, arrived in the 1760s.^{3,4} The Tucker family settled the area later established as Downtown Lenoir in 1765. Fort Grider was built on the present-day site of The Campus in 1765 as a protected compound for nearby settlers from local Indigenous groups and later for the Overmountain Men on their journey south.^{5,6,7,8}



Early Downtown Lenoir and Hibriten Mountain. (n.d.). Comprehensive Architectural Survey of the City of Lenoir.



Map of Lenoir as laid out by surveyor Edmund Jones (1841). Comprehensive Architectural Survey of the City of Lenoir.



Final assembly and sanding at Lenoir Chair Co. (1943). State Archives of North Carolina, Dept. of Conservation and Development, Travel Info. Division Photo. Collection. Flickr.

Encampment occurred here during the pivotal Kings Mountain campaign of 1780, which Thomas Jefferson called the “turning of the tide” in the American Revolution.⁹ The first area plantations were established in the nearby foothills following the Revolutionary War through the early 1800s, including General William Lenoir’s Fort Defiance.¹⁰

Postcolonial Development

James Harper settled near Fort Grider in the 1820s on a plantation now home to the Fairfield neighborhood, creating a store along busy cross-roads that sold goods from nearby plantations, farms, and millers.^{11,12,13} The Hog Waller, a large open-air market, attracted regional trade Downtown.¹⁴ Lenoir was eventually founded as the seat of Caldwell County in 1841 from land given by General William Lenoir, James Harper, and Seth Bradshaw. Like other county seats in western North Carolina, Lenoir was laid out in a grid, placing the courthouse in a central square created by notching the corners of adjacent blocks.¹⁵ Homesteads developed on side streets extending from the courthouse.

Rapid Industrial and Population Growth

The arrival of the railroad shifted Lenoir from a primarily farming and merchant community to a leading regional industrial hub in just two decades. The Chester and Lenoir Narrow Gauge Railroad opened in 1884 between Lenoir and Chester, South Carolina to transport lumber, cotton, and cattle, as well as summertime tourists. The former narrow-gauge railroad is the present-day OVT multiuse path.¹⁶ The railroad established Lenoir as a “gateway” to Blowing Rock and the Blue Ridge Mountains. As a result, several hotels were built in Downtown, and factories, sawmills, and related industrial sites were built off the railroad to allow for easy importing and exporting.¹⁷

Caldwell County’s first furniture company, Lenoir Furniture Company (later Harper Furniture Company), opened in 1889.¹⁸ This jump-started the county’s growth in an industry that would supply thousands of local jobs and send furniture to 30 different countries.

From raw material, inspired design, grit, and hard work, Lenoir’s factory

workers created some of the most elegant works of wooden art created in American history. As the furniture industry grew, naturally, so did Downtown Lenoir.¹⁹ Gasoline street lamps came to Downtown in 1890 as older homesteads were replaced with commercial buildings and storefronts.²⁰ By 1902, Lenoir had at least 10 factories producing flour, lumber, furniture, boxes, and building supplies. The original brick courthouse in the center of the square was replaced with the current courthouse along the northwest block in 1904.

Lenoir's population skyrocketed from 673 in 1890 to 3,718 in 1920.²¹ Nearly 70% of the buildings built during the early industrial boom remain in Downtown Lenoir.²² The furniture industry and related industries continued to grow, and by 1945, Lenoir was home to 15 large furniture manufacturing plants, two veneer plants, two mirror plants, one paper box and packing materials plant, and several other factories for major industries, including textile mills and 7 cotton mills. The city's population doubled to 7,598 by 1940.²³ Passenger rail service slowed to 1 train per day as cars became more popular.²⁴

The arts flourished in Downtown during this time. The Hog Waller Market was the birthplace of the careers of soapbox orators, bluegrass gospel, blues, folk singers, and other major performers, including Arthel "Doc" Watson, a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.^{25,26} As many as 18 theaters were built and started operation between 1912 and 1943 supporting films, live theater, opera, and orchestra performances.²⁷ At least three of these theaters, the Center Theater, State Theatre, and Henkel Opera House, are still standing. While the Center Theater is vacant, the State Theatre is now the Side Street Pour House and Grill and the Henkel Opera House is undergoing renovation for use as an event venue.

In 1924, the Lenoir High School Band was founded by James Harper.²⁸ The band would go on to develop a national reputation as one of the best marching bands in the country. Though the band was disbanded in the 1970s when the Lenoir school system merged with the Caldwell County school system, both the band and The Campus's Harper Band Building continue to carry a notable amount of nostalgia for Lenoir High School alumni.



The Center Theater. (1941). Bill Tate via The News-Topic.



The Center Theater today. (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.



Cloudy Day in Lenoir. (September 11, 2023). Neal Wellons. Flickr.



Blue Bell at Lenoir Mills. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.

Postwar Growth and Change

Most of Downtown Lenoir was constructed before 1950. Beginning in the 1900s, subdivisions surrounding Downtown became popular for housing factory workers in the Lerinco neighborhood and middle-and upper-class workers and factory owners in the Fairfield and Maehill Park neighborhoods. The West End, Freedman, and Powellton neighborhoods, historic African American neighborhoods created from the land of former enslavers, grew between the 1920s and 1960s around commercial centers like Finley Avenue, just outside Downtown Lenoir.²⁹

By 1981, 45% of workers in Caldwell County were employed in the furniture industry; Broyhill Furniture Industries was the largest employer in the county with a workforce of 6,600.³⁰ In the 1990s, however, employment slowed as furniture imports increased and domestic production decreased.^{31,32} The closure of three plants between 2005-2007 eliminated nearly 1,600 jobs.³³ Further layoffs and factory closures have continued in the decades since. However, the region's economy has diversified and expanded to include a Google data center, pharmaceutical companies, and other industries.³⁴

Today

Downtown Lenoir is now home to a diverse mixture of industries and innovation, including small businesses, restaurants and cafes, breweries and meaderies, artists, technology, and medical and legal services. The City's focus on historic preservation, economic development, and a wave of public and private investments has led to the return of an active, mixed-use Downtown. Recent successes include the ongoing renovations at The Campus (including the 500-seat auditorium and "flex-space" gymnasium) and the purchase of nearby property for the OVT Pavilion. In addition, the new Lenoir Mills residential development and other major adaptive reuse projects – in the same historic buildings that were so critical to the early growth of Downtown – have encouraged residential and commercial growth critical for the resurgence of Downtown today. The award-winning programs and initiatives related to Downtown Lenoir and other City wins have further underscored the innovations and power of Lenoir's Downtown core. Building on this momentum, the Plan creates a pathway for continued growth and success.

The National Register of Historic Places Study List and National Register

EXISTING LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS

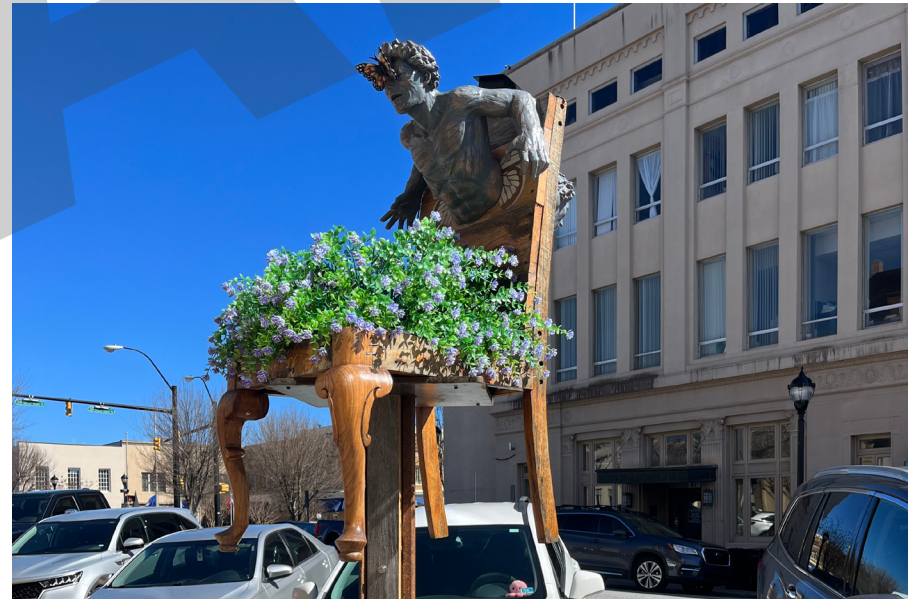
list six structures in Lenoir as individually significant buildings: Lenoir Mills, now restored as the Blue Bell at Lenoir Mills; the Post Office; Hunt-Gwyn Motor Company, now a multi-suite commercial building; First Baptist Church; Lenoir High School, or The Campus; and Caldwell County Courthouse. Downtown Lenoir is also home to a National Register Historic District, first listed in 2007 and expanded in 2013.^{35,36} The original Historic District includes 39 contributing buildings and two contributing objects, most of which are brick structures built between 1888 and 1959. The 2013 boundary increase expanded the district south to include four contributing buildings that were built between 1937 and 1959, including the Center Theater (currently vacant) and Dayvault's Drug Store, now an Italian restaurant.

Two locally managed districts, the Municipal Service District and the Social District, were designated to encourage and harness Downtown's business growth. The Municipal Service District is an area covering much of Downtown Lenoir; property owners within the MSD pay a 0.2% additional tax to partially fund DLMSt's operations (including major events).³⁷ The Downtown Economic Development Department administers the City's Main Street Program. The Social District was enacted in 2022 to create a designated area in which people can walk with open containers of alcoholic beverages that are sold by a participating business with a liquor license.^{38,39} North Carolina passed legislation in late 2021 permitting social districts in municipalities that approved local rules and boundaries.

Lenoir has the most public outdoor sculptures per capita in the United States, including a series of outdoor sculptures located in Downtown.^{40,41} "Across the Grain," a 26-foot diameter earth cast sculpture honoring Lenoir's industrial growth, was named as part of North Carolina's Great Places by the North Carolina chapter of the American Planning Association in 2019.⁴² Six other permanent sculptures across Downtown are maintained by the City of Lenoir, while smaller sculptures are annual installations in Tucker's Gallery, an open air gallery hosted by Caldwell Arts Council and the City of Lenoir.⁴³

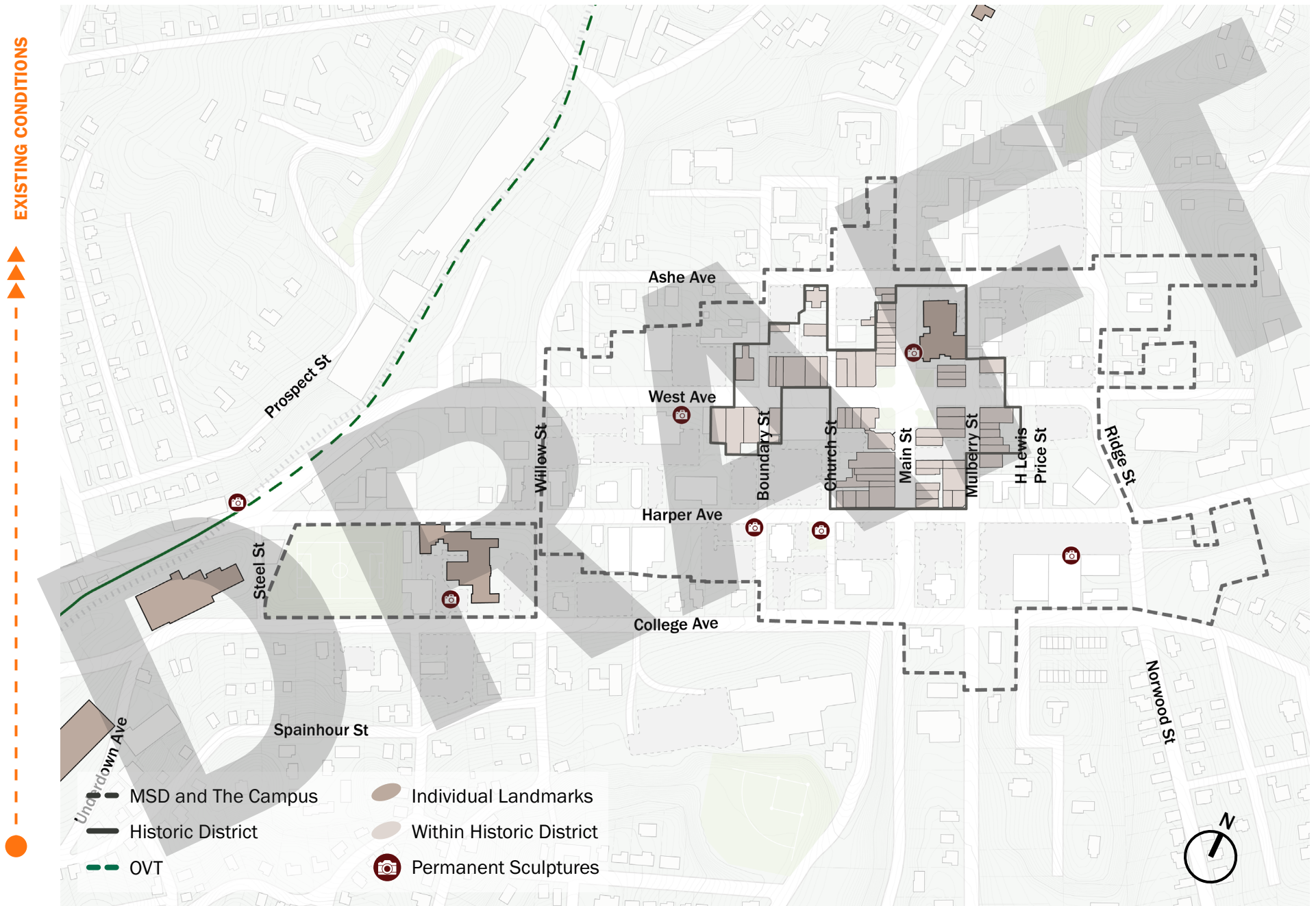


Across the Grain. (n.d.). Thomas Sayre.



Niki Hildebrand's "Spirit of a New Idea", part of Tucker's Gallery on West Avenue. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.

Existing Landmarks and Districts





1920s clock from the former Bank of Lenoir, posted on its previous tower. The clock tower is currently undergoing replacement. (n.d). Downtown Lenoir.



Main Street, Showing Confederate Monument, Lenoir, N.C. (1900s-1930s). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Walker Evans Archive.



North Main Street, featuring the Caldwell County Courthouse (foreground) and the First Baptist Church of Lenoir (background). (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.

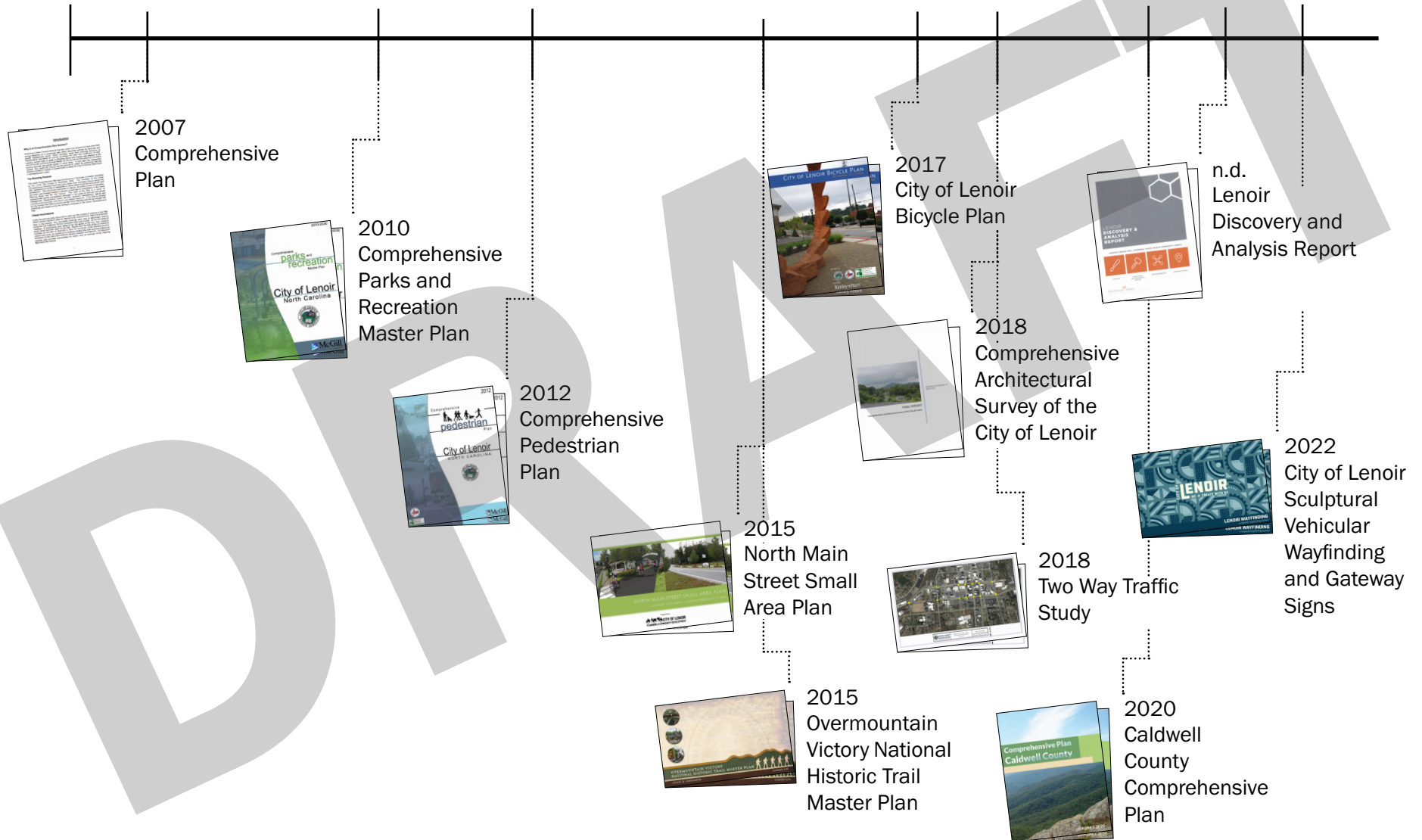


Northwest corner of West Avenue and Main Street, featuring the Downtown Stage and historic buildings. (October 9, 2022). DLR Group.

PAST AND ONGOING INITIATIVES

Since 2007, with the release of the Comprehensive Plan, Lenoir has undertaken or been a part of over 10 plans to grow arts and culture, connectivity and walkability, placemaking, and historic preservation in Downtown. These plans were reviewed to better understand previous growth directions and local priorities.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Comprehensive Plan, 2007

The Comprehensive Plan recommends future land use strategies for Lenoir, focusing on streamlined development review, walkable neighborhoods, codified property maintenance and code enforcement standards, and promoting Lenoir as a retirement destination.

The Comprehensive Plan proposes incentives for business owners, for growing arts and culture, and for the redevelopment of industrial sites, as well as other zoning and land use strategies to preserve historic resources. The Downtown Plan similarly makes recommendations to support Lenoir's entrepreneurs, artists and cultural organizations, and adaptive reuse and historic preservation. The RFP for an new citywide Comprehensive Plan was released in January 2024.

Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2010

The Parks and Recreation Plan emphasizes potential connections between new and existing parks and recreational resources and makes recommendations for additional active recreational facilities, greenway/trail systems, and recreational programming in Lenoir.

At the time the Parks and Recreation Plan was published, the most used facilities in Lenoir were the Aquatic Center and Lenoir Greenway; the least used were West End Park, Campus buildings, and Rotary Soccer Center. The Downtown Plan seeks to grow the recreational capacity of The Campus and create greenways and other connections to Downtown and nearby neighborhoods. An RFP for a new citywide Parks and Recreation Plan will be released in 2024.

Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan, 2012

The Pedestrian Plan identifies the areas with the highest pedestrian use and makes recommendations for future improvements.

With the exception of U.S. 321, the highest traffic areas in Lenoir at the time were all Downtown: Main Street from Ashe Avenue to College Avenue, West Avenue from Ridge Street to Willow Street, College Avenue near The Campus. The Downtown area also had the highest density of connected sidewalks in Lenoir.

Given this level of pedestrian activity, the Pedestrian Plan included a recommendation for painted crosswalks. The Downtown Plan makes additional recommendations to improve walkability and the pedestrian experience.

North Main Street Small Area Plan, 2015

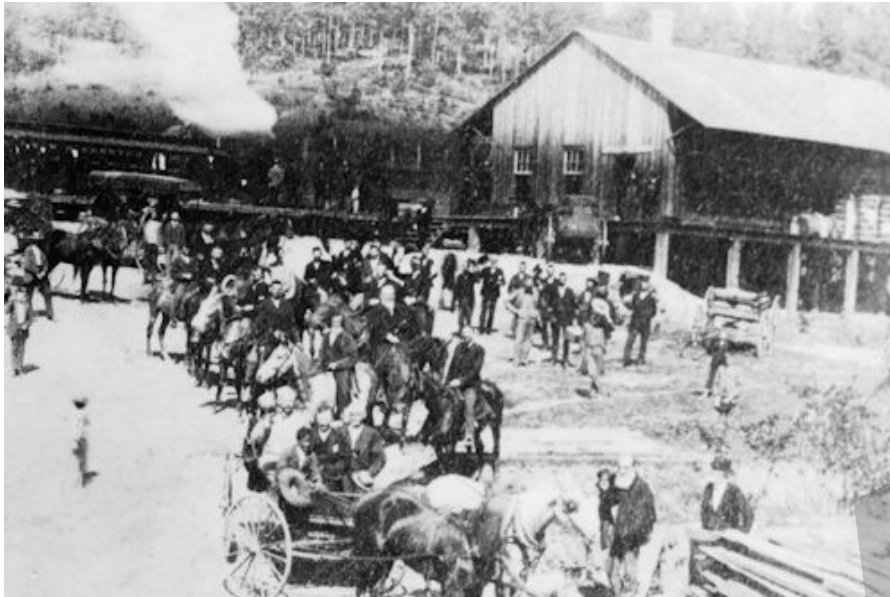
The North Main Street Plan encourages mixed-use developments, protecting existing residents from displacement while improving housing quality and increasing homeownership opportunities, and enhancing active participation and recreation in the neighborhood.

Located just to the north of the Downtown Plan's study areas, the North Main Street Plan makes recommendations to center North Main Street as a gateway to Downtown and make improvements at J.E. Broyhill Park and on the Lenoir Greenway. The Downtown Plan similarly makes recommendations for more visible gateways to Downtown.

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Master Plan, 2015

Created for the National Park Service and local partners, this Plan extends the OVT on a 20-mile segment of the former Carolina and Northwestern Narrow Gauge Railroad between Lenoir and Morganton. An additional study is planned for the segment connecting Lenoir north to the W. Herr Scott Reservoir in Wilkesboro.

The Trail Master Plan includes placemaking activities centering on and near The Campus, including proposals for a marketplace at the Carolina and Northwestern Railway Freight Station and a path-side brewery and arts district below Unity Park and Community Garden. The Downtown Plan creates connections between the OVT, The Campus, and Downtown Lenoir through mixed-use developments and walking and biking routes.



First passenger train arrives at Lenoir Depot. (June 5, 1884). Caldwell Heritage Museum.



West Ave. At Night Showing New Post Office, Lenoir, N.C. (n.d.). UNC Libraries, Durwood Barbour Collection of North Carolina Postcards. Flickr.

City of Lenoir Bicycle Plan, 2017

In this plan, survey and community engagement participants showed strong support for expanding the Lenoir Greenway, emphasizing access to Downtown Lenoir and the need for bicycle facilities, like bike storage or bike lanes, to encourage lower travel speeds and high bicycle visibility. The NC-2 Mountains to Sea bicycle route, from Manteo and the Outer Banks to Murphy and the Great Smoky Mountains, crosses through Downtown via Ridge Street and West Avenue.

Three of the plan's five highest priority projects are Downtown, including a buffered bike lane with striping on Harper Avenue, re-striping and widening College Avenue for bicycles, and re-striping and adding markers for bike lanes and sharrows on West Avenue.

Comprehensive Architectural Survey of the City of Lenoir, 2018

Much of the history of Downtown Lenoir is detailed in the Architectural Survey, spanning commercial and residential architecture over Lenoir's history. Downtown Lenoir was originally designed as a walkable, dense mixed-use core when it was platted in the 1840s and developed this way through the 1930s. Unlike other small historic cities, Lenoir never had streetcars to drive growth. The railroad, now the OVT, was the way tourists arrived to Lenoir and walked to Downtown for entertainment, food, and lodging. The OVT today has potential to revive this impact.

Two Way Traffic Study, 2018

This study provides an analysis of vehicular traffic through Downtown during morning and evening peaks. West Avenue, Harper Avenue, Willow Street, Main Street, Mulberry Street, and Ridge Street were studied to become two-way streets, with Boundary Street and Church Street remaining one-way streets. Crosswalks, turning lanes, and streetlights were also proposed. On-street parking was not redesigned, and minimal additional spaces were proposed.

Changes to Downtown streets proposed in this study, including two-way streets, streetlights, crosswalks, and other features, will change vehicular entry patterns to Downtown. However, no recommendations are provided for bicycle and pedestrian traffic or on-street parking.

Caldwell County Comprehensive Plan, 2020

Surveys and public meetings completed for this plan indicated that residents consider Lenoir's and Caldwell County's strengths to be the rural environment and quality education, with opportunities for growth in the OVT, tourism, proximity to the Blue Ridge Mountains, good restaurants, and housing for retirees. These participants also indicated that Lenoir and the County are missing opportunities for multiuse event spaces, housing, code enforcement, high-speed internet, and Planned development. The community voices represented in the Plan were supportive of more housing, event spaces, and restored buildings. Likewise, the Downtown Plan recommends several multiuse and adaptive reuse opportunities.

Lenoir Discovery and Analysis Report

A branding study recommended Lenoir leverage its unique community assets in the arts, its furniture and manufacturing history, its entrepreneurialism, and its community spirit. These things also define Downtown. The report proposes that storytelling about Downtown activity center its reinvention, its status as a gathering place, and its culture of innovation and craftsmanship.

The Downtown Plan reflects this, making land use and urban design recommendations to amplify the history and culture of Downtown Lenoir.

City of Lenoir Sculptural Vehicular Wayfinding and Gateway Signs, 2022

Based on an earlier branding plan, this signage plan recommends signage highlighting Downtown and The Campus, Walker Stadium, the Heritage Museum, J.E. Broyhill Park, and other local sites outside Downtown on signs placed at Harper Avenue and U.S. 321, along Harper Avenue, Main Street, Mulberry Street, and West Avenue.

Adding consistent, branded vehicular wayfinding and gateway signage leading to and within Downtown will help direct visitors to the downtown core. Urban design strategies proposed in this Plan will also signal clear gateways to Downtown through cohesive infill development and open space improvements.



Daytime illustration of new gateway signage. (n.d.). City of Lenoir.

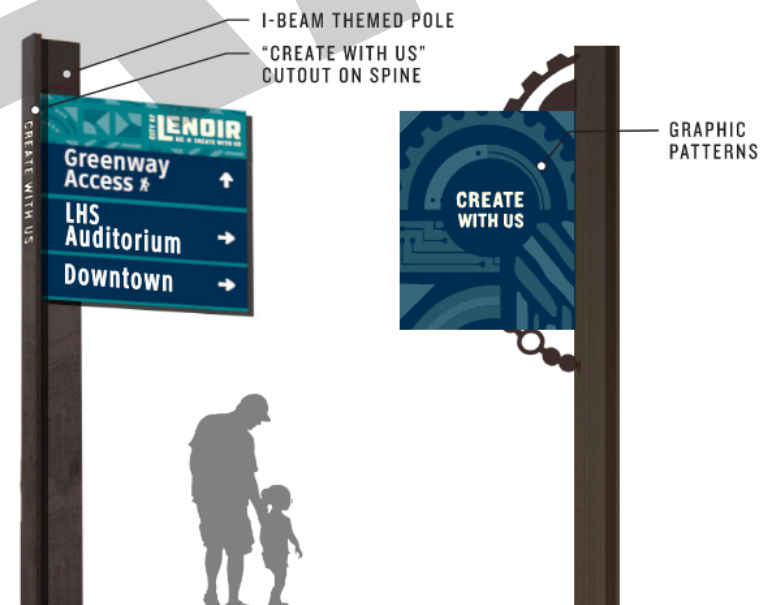


Illustration of new wayfinding signage for Downtown Lenoir, to scale. (2022). City of Lenoir Sculptural Vehicular Wayfinding and Gateway Signs.

RECENT SUCCESSES AND EFFORTS

The Downtown Lenoir Municipal Service District has benefited from nearly \$15 million in public and private investment in recent years, including over \$4 million in 2022 alone. This has included the completion of new residential projects (including the conversion of second floors to residential units), the establishment of 60+ new businesses (including 10 in 2022), and increased placemaking efforts such as the now annual holiday lights display.

One of the largest redevelopment projects currently in the works is the conversion of three historic industrial properties to residential and commercial uses. The \$30+ million, developer-led effort began with the transformation of Lenoir's historic Blue Bell textile mill into Blue Bell at Lenoir Mills, a 46-unit apartment property. The Blue Bell received its Certificate of Occupancy in 2021 and is 95% leased. The average rent is \$1,110 per month. The second phase of this effort plans to convert the former Steele Cotton Mill into 60 additional residential units and the former Freight Train Depot into commercial use (potentially a restaurant). All three of these properties sit adjacent to The Campus. The continued activation of the area, through population growth and increased foot traffic to a commercial enterprise, will play a crucial role in anchoring The Campus as an activity center within the Downtown.

THE DOWNTOWN

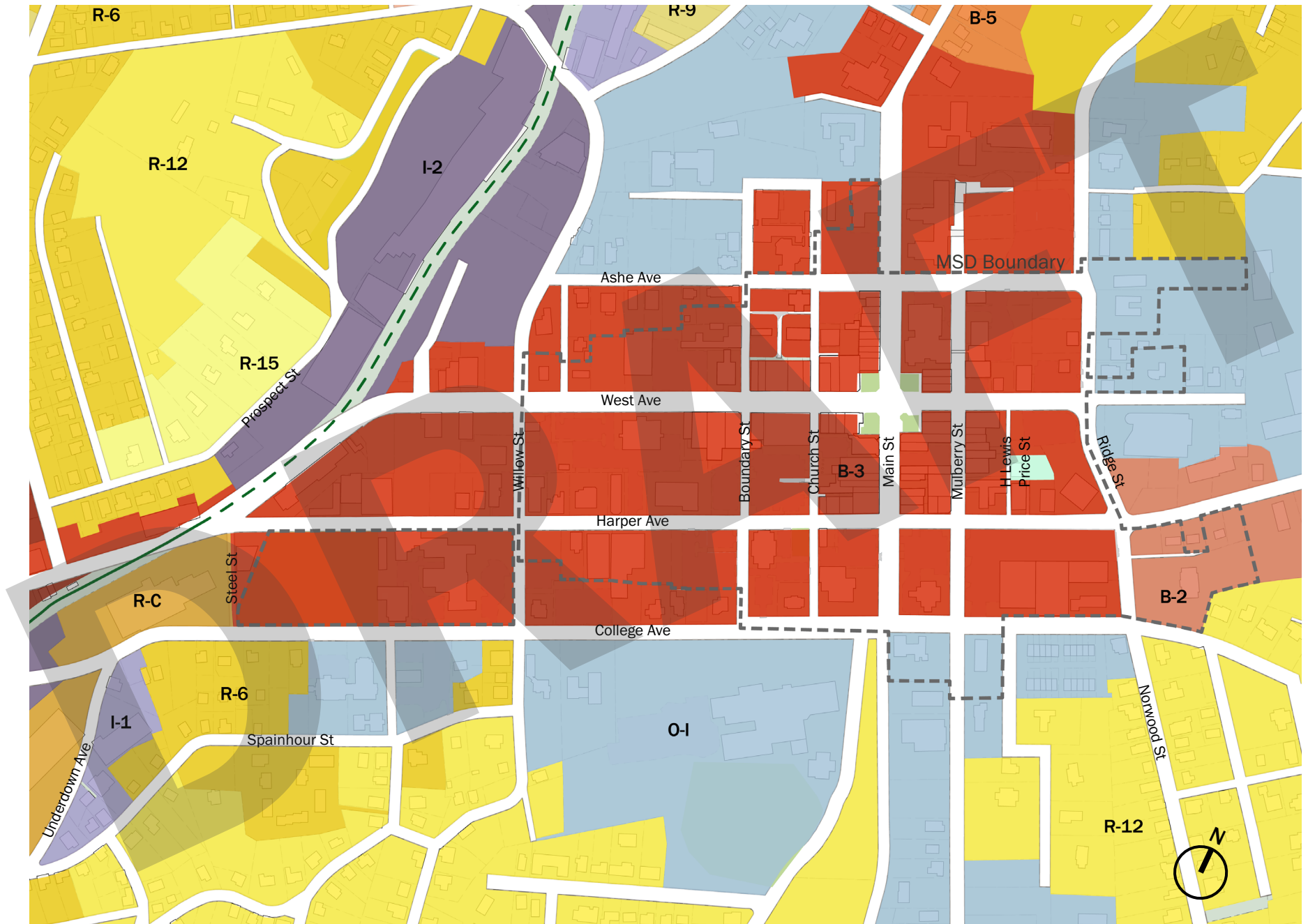
Land Use and Zoning

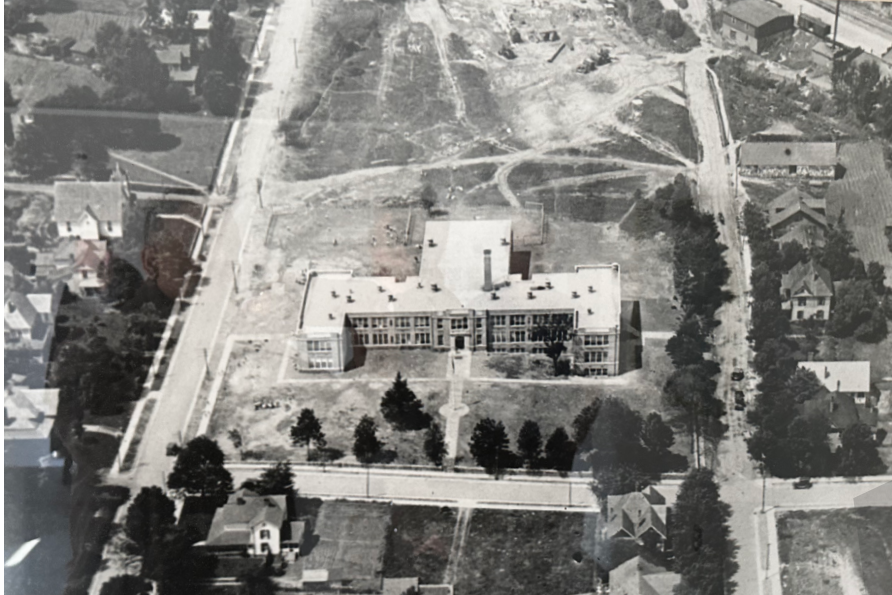
Zoning in Downtown Lenoir is primarily B-3 Central Business District, with O-I Office and Institutional zoning at Lenoir Presbyterian Church, R-C Residential-Commercial zoning at Blue Bell at Lenoir Mills, and Heavy Industrial zoning at the former Broyhill factory in the northwest. Zoning neighboring the Downtown area includes B-2 General Business, zoned along Harper Avenue and Ridge Street; O-I Office and Institutional along College Avenue, Main Street, and Ridge Street; R-6 Multifamily Residential along College Avenue near The Campus, in the West End to the north of the OVT, and in Freedman near J.E. Broyhill Park.

The B-3 Central Business District is “intended to promote the Downtown Central Business District as the city’s central hub for financial, professional, cultural, and governmental business by providing a variety of supporting personal services, retail uses, restaurants, and gathering spaces that help support a vibrant, active downtown for people employed in and around the district as well as transient shoppers.” Building requirements are intended to encourage infill development and ground floor active uses with upper floor office or residential and discourage demolition of contributing historic structures.

These zoning designations can be seen on the map shown right.

Zoning Designations





Aerial view of Lenoir High School. (circa 1925). Original photo on display at The Campus.



J.M. Bernhardt Planing Mill and Box Factory - Steele Cotton Mill, Lenoir, Caldwell County. (August 14, 2016). North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Flickr.

Land Ownership

Downtown Lenoir includes 247 parcels with approximately 128 unique owners. These parcels range in size from 300 square feet, part of a city-owned parking lot on Harper Ave, to over 430,000 square feet (or 10 acres), formerly the Harper Manufacturing Plant. The Campus is the largest property wholly within Downtown.

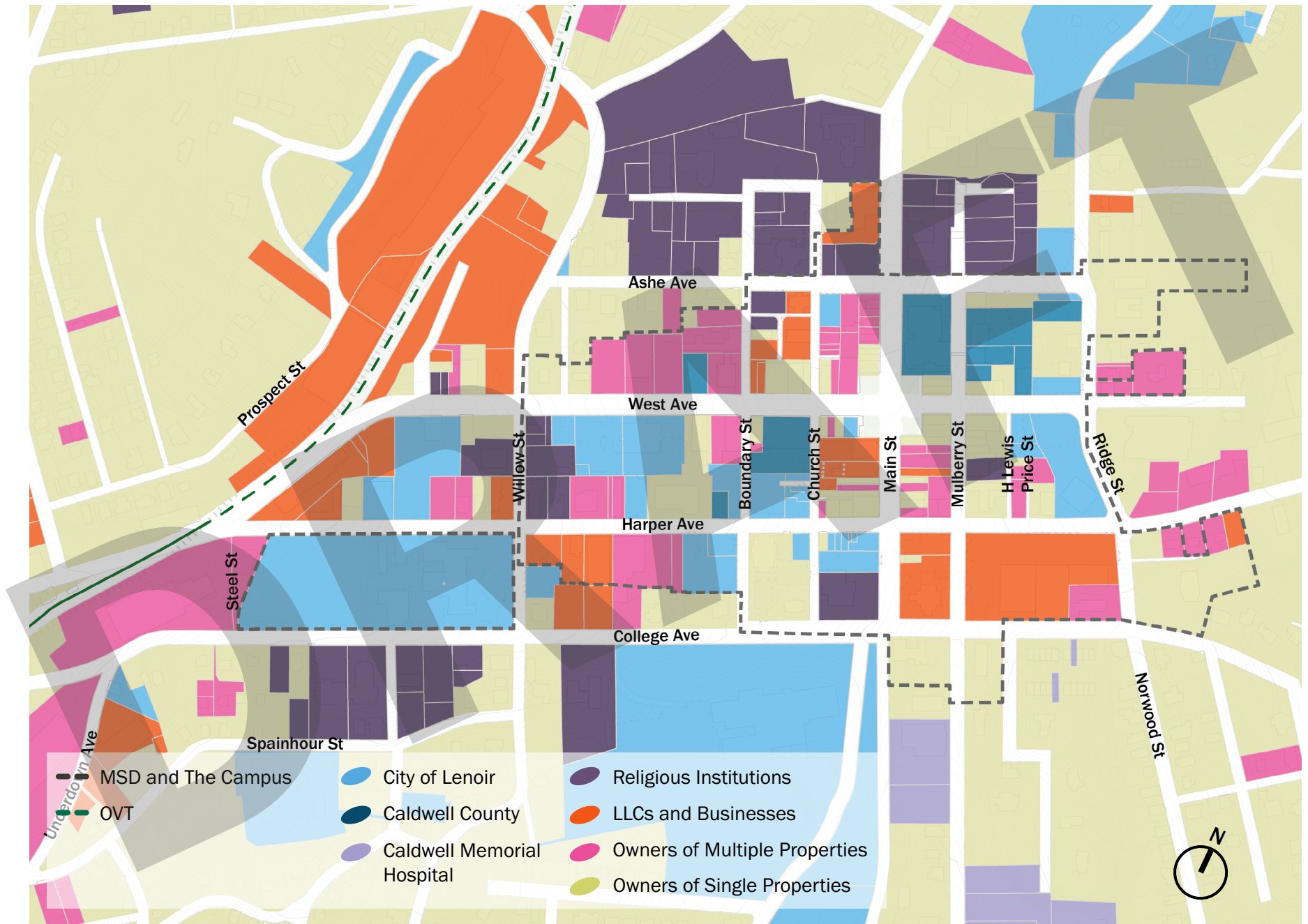
The top five largest landowners include the City of Lenoir, with 34 parcels totaling over 15.5 acres, Antonia Holdings/Woodsmiths Holdings LLC with over 11 acres, Lenoir Presbyterian Church with over 6 acres, 1171 Harper/Steele Box LLC with over 3.5 acres (also Lenoir Depot LLC/Blue Bell Lenoir LLC not within the discrete boundaries), and Caldwell County with over 3.5 acres. Entities often own contiguous parcels, with parts of entire blocks often owned by just one individual or entity.

Including the City of Lenoir's properties, over 40% of land area in Downtown is held by public or institutional uses, including Caldwell County and religious institutions. Since these entities are not required to pay property taxes, the City's earning potential through property taxes is limited.

The City of Lenoir owns over 19% of land in Downtown; as a major landowner, the City has an opportunity to operationalize changes to benefit Lenoir residents and Downtown vibrancy. In addition, six acres of City-owned land, or nearly 40% of the City's holdings, are currently parking lots; these lots present more immediate opportunities for infill development.

All holdings can be seen in the map shown right.

Land Ownership





J.E. Broyhill Park. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.



Unity Park and Community Gardens. (n.d.). City of Lenoir.

Parks, Open Space and Trails

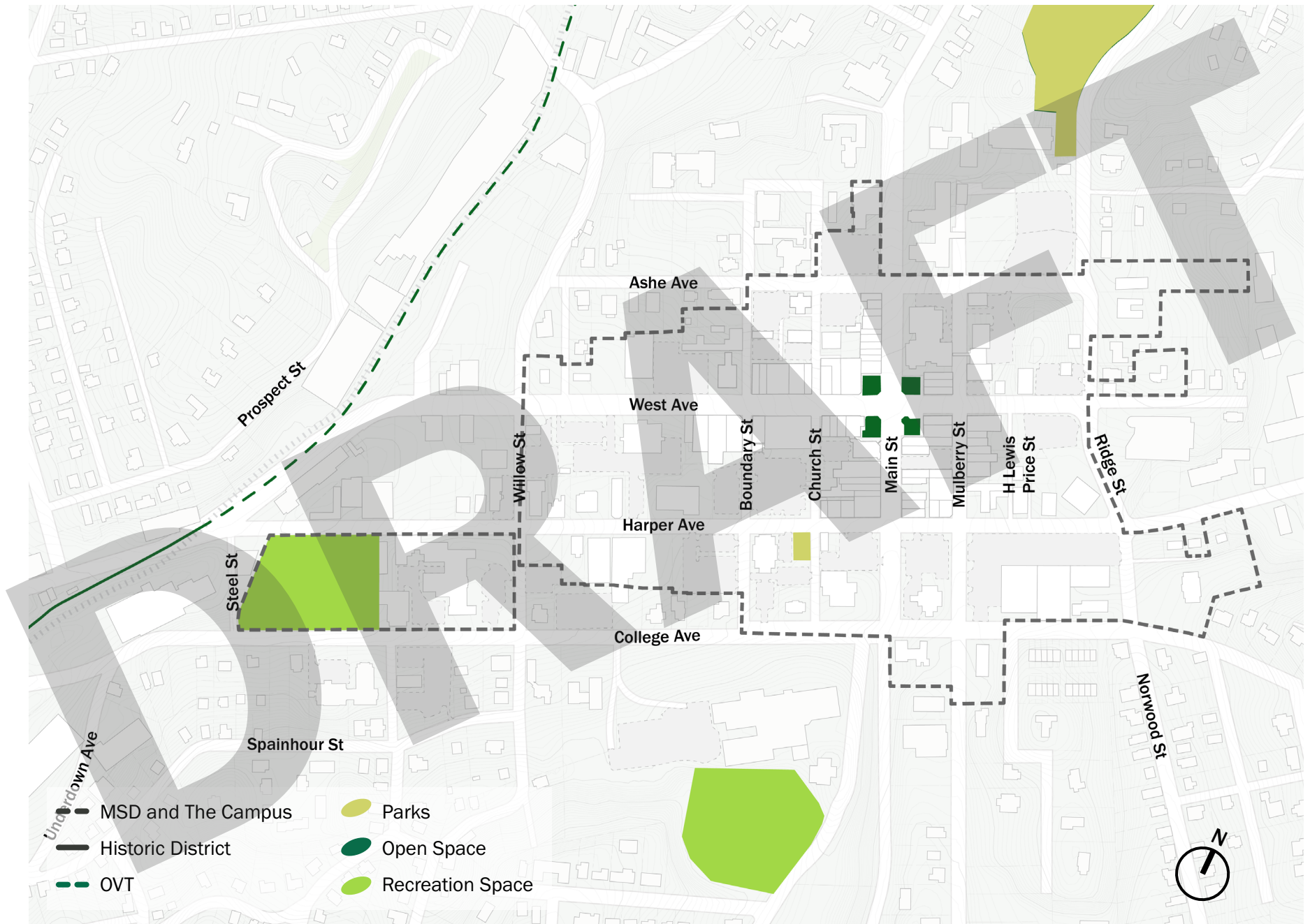
Downtown Lenoir has few green spaces or recreational areas. Just northeast of Downtown, J.E. Broyhill Park is a large park with hilly terrain. It is not suitable for sports or play other than walking on trails, and the topography has created a perception of a lack of safety. The OVT marks the western edge of Downtown, built upon the historic rail bed that once served Lenoir's industrial growth. The OVT is currently in progress; portions of the trail to the south of Downtown and The Campus have been cleared and paved, but the trail has not been constructed north of College Avenue. Overlooking The Campus, the Unity Park and Community Gardens (outside map frame) provides green space and gardening opportunities for residents.

Parks and open space can be seen in the map shown right.



Walker Stadium. (n.d.). Downtown Lenoir.

Parks, Open Space, and Trails





North Main Street looking north to the Caldwell County Courthouse. (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.



West Avenue looking east. (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.

Vacancy

In March 2023, the planning team worked with Downtown Lenoir staff to identify vacant Downtown properties. Buildings in Downtown are often mixed-use, with retail or office use on the ground floor and residential or office use on the second and/or third floors.

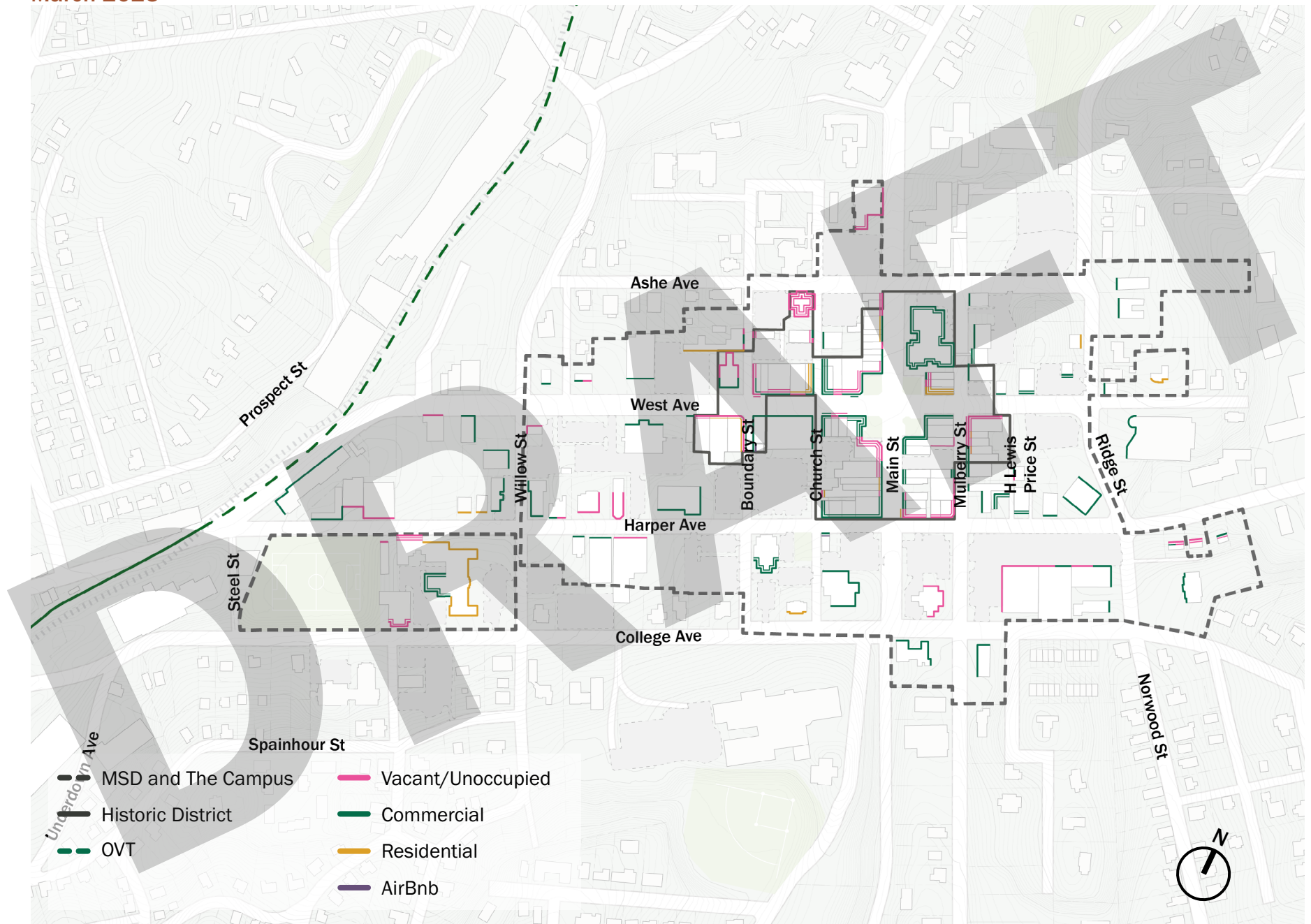
There are a high number of vacancies in Downtown. Wide blocks of vacant properties, particularly wide blocks of vacant or inactive ground floors, make blocks feel uninviting to pedestrians and discourage longer stays. Large vacant or underutilized properties, like the former bank on the southwest corner of West Avenue NW and North Main Street, and the vacant and residential buildings next to Tybrisa Books on the northeast corner do not bring foot traffic into more than half of the storefronts facing the Central Square.

The Moving Lenoir to the Second Floor initiative seeks to emphasize ground floor retail or other active uses and move less active office or residential spaces to upper floors in effort to encourage more pedestrian activity and a vibrant street life Downtown. Although several historic tax credit and residential projects have been spurred since its inception, of the occupied street frontages, there are still a significant amount of office spaces that have limited daytime visitors and less night activity. Additionally, most upper floors are vacant.

Vacancies in March 2023 within the Municipal Service District can be seen in the map shown right. Downtown Lenoir staff only track commercial vacancies, not residential vacancies. As such, assumptions about the occupancy of residential spaces may be less accurate because they rely more on anecdotal data.

Vacancy

March 2023





North Carolina Blackberry Festival. (July 13, 2023). NC Blackberry Festival, Lenoir.



North Carolina Gravity Games. (2023). North Carolina Science Festival.

Activities and Programming

Lenoir's busy schedule of festivals and major events brings vendors, visitors, and foot traffic into Downtown. Most events are free, with the only ticketed events of the year being the Carolina Tattoo and Arts Gathering in September, Downtown Carriage Rides during the holiday season, and the Lenoir Legends home games at nearby Walker Stadium in the summer.

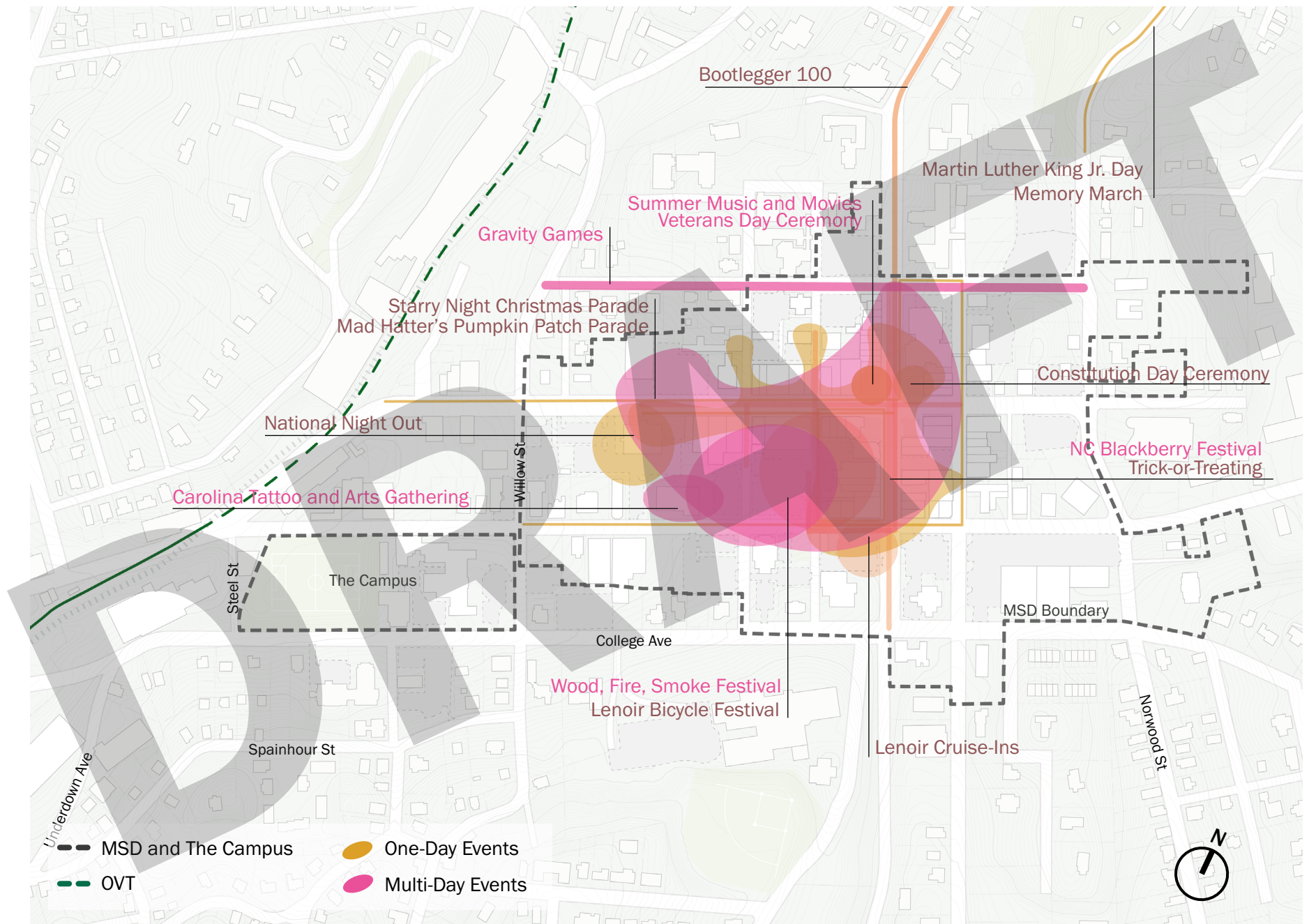
Most events are centered around Church, West, and Main Streets. Major events, like the North Carolina Blackberry Festival, Carolina Tattoo and Arts Gathering, and Wood, Fire, Smoke Festival are located here to use the City-owned parking lot and adjacent streets and businesses as central hubs for vendors and visitors. Smaller events, including those geared toward more local audiences, rely more on road closures along Main Street, West Avenue, and Harper Avenue.

Outside of sporting events held at Walker and Mack Cook Stadiums, most event activity takes place in the Central Square and adjacent streets. Minimal activity spreads beyond the core to encompass outer areas of Downtown.

Most major events are single-day events; the only multi-day happenings are the North Carolina Blackberry Festival, held in July, and Carolina Tattoo and Arts Gathering. Most Downtown events occur in June and July, with one or two events held in other months and none held in January or February.

A map of activities and their locations in Downtown can be found right. An inventory of Lenoir's festivals and events is included in the Appendix. The former Lenoir High School, including the Harper Band Building,

Locations of Major Activities and Programming Downtown





Carolina Tattoo and Arts Gathering. (September 2, 2023). Carolina Tattoo and Arts Gathering.



WNC Sculpture Center staff pouring iron into molds at the Wood, Fire, Smoke Festival. (October 8, 2022). City of Lenoir.



Martin Luther King Jr. Day Memory March. (January 15, 2024). City of Lenoir.



Lenoir Cruise-Ins. (September 3, 2023). Lenoir Downtown Cruisers, Inc.



Children singing on the Downtown stage during Light Up Lenoir (November 17, 2022). City of Lenoir.



Bootlegger 100. (2018). Downtown Lenoir via Gravel Cyclist.



Mad Hatter's Pumpkin Patch Parade. (October 28, 2022). City of Lenoir.



Performers on the Downtown Stage during Summer Music Madness. (June 28, 2019). City of Lenoir.

The Campus

EXISTING CONDITIONS



THE CAMPUS

Gymnasium, and Mack Cook Stadium, are promoted together as The Campus. The Campus was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990, with the High School, Band Building, and Mack Cook Stadium identified as contributing structures. The Gymnasium, concession building, cinder block bathroom building, and Masonry Building are not contributing buildings, primarily due to age.⁴⁴

Lenoir High School was designed by Benton and Benton, a Wilson, North Carolina-based firm that operated from 1915-1935, and was constructed in 1922, with the first students attending in 1923.⁴⁵ The site of the school is the former site of Fort Grider, built by early colonial settlers of Lenoir. The school was attended by white students of Lenoir; Black/African American students attended Freedman High School, which was built in 1932 as the first high school for Black/African American children in Caldwell County.⁴⁶ Lenoir High School was integrated in the early 1960s, followed by the closure of Freedman High School. An addition to Lenoir High School was built in 1962 for additional classrooms. The school closed shortly after, in 1977, as part of a merger to form a regional school network.⁴⁷ The building was vacant by 1981 and remained so for nearly a decade, until classrooms were retrofit to become senior apartments in 1989. The front portion of the building now houses 44 apartments for senior living.

The Lenoir High School Band began in 1924 following a donation of instruments. Led by former WWI Army Captain James C. Harper, the Band was taught by specialists from across the region and was top ranked in state music competitions. The Band performed nationally, including at the 1939 World's Fair in New York City.⁴⁸ Many graduates of the Lenoir High School band became music professors and professional musicians, playing with the Minnesota Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, and other institutions.⁴⁹ In 1975, Captain Harper was named one of seven Honorary Life Presidents of the American Bandmasters Association, whose ranks also include John Philips Sousa.⁵⁰

To foster this rich musical education, the Band building was built in



Lenoir High School today. (October 9, 2022). DLR Group.



Fort Grider marker in front of Lenoir High School. (n.d.). *Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Master Plan*.



Captain Harper directing students in the Lenoir High School Band. (n.d.). Downtown Lenoir.



Mack Cook sitting in the stands in front of the press box at Mack Cook Stadium. (1953). Lenoir High School Band - Marching Through the Century Facebook Group.

1937, designed by Robert Clemmer with significant input from Captain Harper. At time of design, only two other purpose-built high school band buildings existed in the United States.⁵¹ In 1958, the building was named the James C. Harper Band Building to honor Captain Harper and his 34 years of leading the student band.⁵²

Mack Cook Stadium is located behind the school buildings. Named for beloved Lenoir High School custodian Mack Cook, the stadium has concrete bleachers built into the College Avenue side hill (built in 1952) and along the back of the high school (predating 1952).⁵³

Current Conditions

The City of Lenoir City Council and staff are committed to the rehabilitation of The Campus. Their rehabilitation will provide the City and Downtown with a much-needed multi-venue event center that includes a 500-seat auditorium, a 10,000 square foot “flex-space” gymnasium, an outdoor recreation athletic field, and potential music and arts venues housed in the Harper Band Building and the Masonry Building. With necessary improvements and upgrades, the auditorium has the potential to be a conference/business meeting facility and a performing arts venue.

Recently, Foothills Performing Arts, a live theater production company, adopted the auditorium as its home theater; much success has been seen in the reintroduction of this facility to the community due to this use. In addition, grants and donations have enabled the City to install new lights at Mack Cook Stadium and acquire two sets of aluminum bleachers. These additions will enable the Stadium’s use for evening events. Adjacent to The Campus, the City has also purchased a property for use as the OVT Pavilion and additional parking.

The 4.5-acre Campus event venue will drive traffic and business to the nearby downtown core. Increased support for existing restaurants and businesses is anticipated, as well as new business development because of its impact. The Campus is ideally situated to become an economic engine for Downtown Lenoir and is perfectly situated along the OVT. Having this event venue placed directly on this Trail will be a draw for recreational tourism and OVT event promotion.



Lenoir High School Band bus leaving from the Harper Band Building. (1953). Lenoir High School Band - Marching Through the Century Facebook Group.



Saxophonist playing in the band room. (n.d.). Downtown Lenoir.



The Harper Band Building today. (October 9, 2022). DLR Group.



The band room today. (December 15, 2022). DLR Group.



Entrance to the Gymnasium. (October 9, 2022). DLR Group.



Future site of the OVT Pavilion/Farmers' Market, with the Masonry Building in the right foreground. (December 15, 2022). DLR Group.



Interior of the Gymnasium. (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.



Mack Cook Stadium. (December 15, 2022). DLR Group.



Entrance to the Auditorium. (October 9, 2022). DLR Group.



Interior of the Masonry Building. (December 15, 2022). DLR Group.



Orchestra and mezzanine of the Auditorium. (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.



Stage of the Auditorium. (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.



Kickoff meeting. (January 24, 2023). DLR Group.



Big Ideas Workshop, The Harper Room. (March 3, 2023). DLR Group.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Lenoir residents, business owners, and other stakeholders were invited to share their input on the future of the Downtown through a multi-pronged engagement process. In January 2023, the planning team visited Lenoir for the first time. On this trip, the team hosted four focus group meetings, presented at the City of Lenoir Committee of the Whole Meeting, and completed eight one-on-one interviews with the Mayor and City Council members, City staff, Lenoir High School alumni, Downtown business owners, and Downtown residents. These meetings provided the Planning team the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the City of Lenoir and, specifically, past successes, new areas of opportunity, places of struggle, and current strengths.

Ideas Workshops

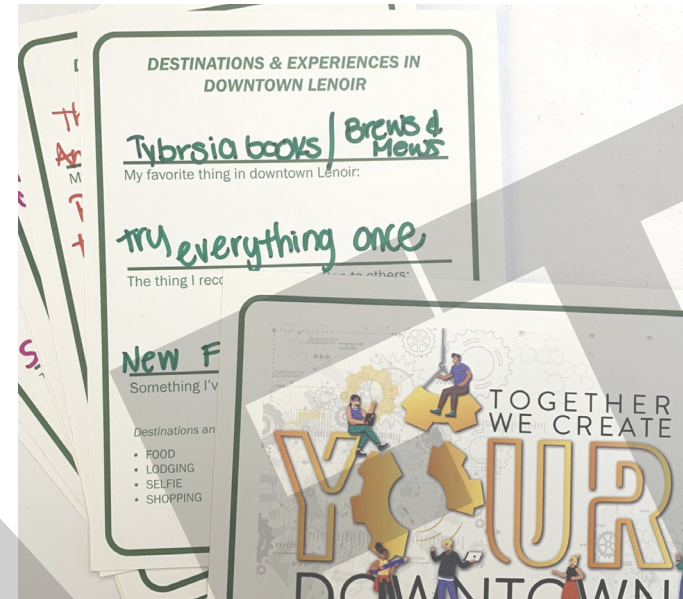
A second phase of engagement was initiated in March 2023. This phase focused on sharing the planning process with the broader Lenoir community as well as gathering feedback on points of pride, areas of concern, perceptions of safety, and future opportunities. Three meetings were held: one each at the Harper Room, Martin Luther King Jr. Center, and Mulberry Recreation Center. More than 120 Lenoir residents or business owners attended.



Big Ideas Workshop, Martin Luther King Jr. Center. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.



Big Ideas Workshop, Mulberry Recreation Center. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.



Sample photograph of cards participants completed. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.



Homepage of Downtown Lenoir Master Plan website. (n.d.). DLR Group.

In these meetings, community members were provided with maps of Downtown Lenoir and the surrounding neighborhoods. Using these maps and dot stickers, individuals marked where they felt happy, safe, frustrated, or saw opportunities. Community members then discussed their reasoning in small groups. Notes were taken by either an assigned scribe or by DLMSt volunteers trained to support meeting facilitation. After the meeting, the resulting maps from each Ideas Workshop were combined and transposed to an online map, which can be seen in the map shown right.

While the map looks unintelligible from a distance, zooming in yields a number of key findings.

- The Central Square is a place where people feel happy and safe.
- Downtown businesses play a large part in making residents feel happy.
- There are a number of places seen as having opportunity: the vacant lot beside Aary's Ice Cream, the vacant property on the corner of Harper Avenue and Mulberry Street, the former Walgreens site, the Center Theater, J.E. Broyhill Park, the Main Street Northwest corridor, the OVT, and The Campus.
- Many of the places where residents see opportunity are places that also yield frustration. This includes the Center Theater, which is in disrepair, and J.E. Broyhill Park, which is largely underutilized. Another key place of frustration is the intersection at Harper Avenue and Ridge Street.

A second exercise asked community members to describe how often they visited Downtown; the obstacles they faced getting there; the businesses, services, and amenities they felt were missing; and the three words they felt best described Lenoir. Each small group shared their common areas of interest as well as areas of disagreement with the larger group of attendees. Generally, there was consensus between groups on Lenoir's missing amenities and obstacles, as seen in the following table.

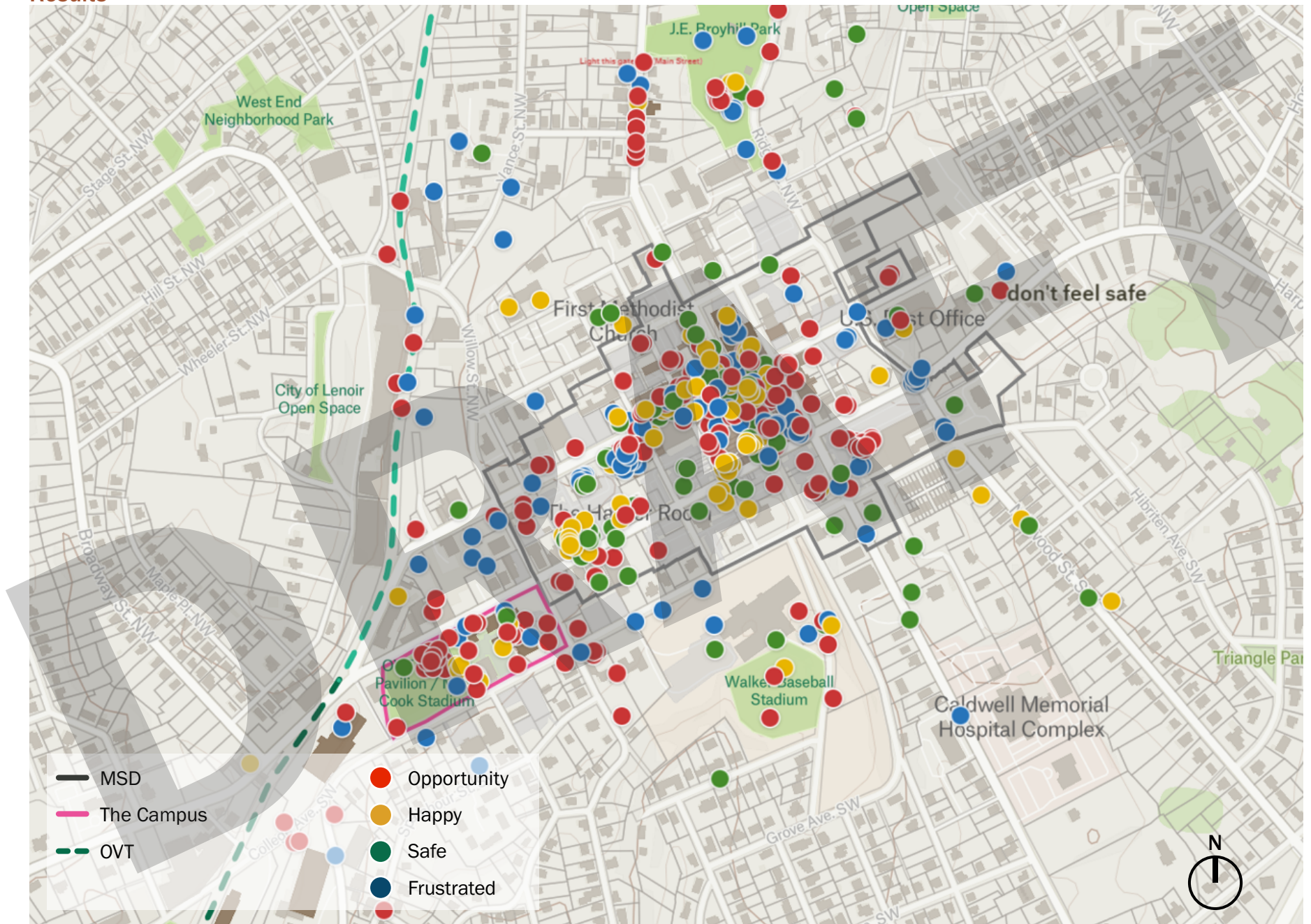
Missing Amenities	Obstacles
Activities for kids (splash pad, family activities, kid-oriented businesses, etc.)	Handicap accessibility (lack of)
Green space	Parking (both too much and not enough)
Grocery/drug store	Poor communications (from the City and business owners)
More restaurants	Signage/wayfinding
Public restrooms	The unhoused population
Signage/wayfinding	Traffic patterns

A final exercise asked attendees to imagine they had a visitor coming to town. On a card, they were invited to record their favorite things about Downtown Lenoir, the things they most recommend, and the things they have wanted to try. Participants filled out 69 cards. Favorite things largely included specific small businesses, festivals and events, Downtown places like the Central Square, or features like public art and walkability.

Downtown businesses and festivals and events were also the things attendees most often recommended to others. Notably, while the things attendees wanted to try included some restaurants or small businesses, they also included things like touring the historic courthouse, taking art classes, or hiking Hibriten Mountain; activities that, in many ways, allow residents to be tourists in their own community.

Community Sentiment Mapping

Results





Participants mapping where they felt happy, safe, frustrated, or saw opportunities in the Big Ideas Workshop at The Harper Room. (March 3, 2023). DLR Group.



Participants mapping where they felt happy, safe, frustrated, or saw opportunities in the Big Ideas Workshop at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center. (March 4, 2023). DLR Group.

Favorite Things

Many people wrote in specific small businesses, festivals and events, and spaces Downtown.

Food and Beverage	29
Experiences (including festivals and events)	16
People and Culture	12
Retail	8
Other	8
Walkability	5
The Central Square/4 Corners/Quad	4
Music	3
Church	2
Other	8

Recommendations

Food and Beverage	46
Experiences (including festivals and events)	20
Retail	10
People and Culture	12
Walkability	3
J.E. Broyhill Park	2
Music	1
Other	6

Things to Try

These varied in activities, from restaurants to festivals to other experiences. 4 mentioned cruise-ins, 12 mentioned specific restaurants, 2 mentioned other small businesses, 5 mentioned festivals, and 2 mentioned walking trails.

This phase of engagement was followed by two additional phases. May engagement sessions presented initial recommendations to the community for feedback. September sessions featured a reveal of the final plan.

Online Engagement

In addition to in-person workshops, residents provided feedback online. In February 2023, the planning team and DLMSt launched a survey. The survey was offered in English and in Spanish and was available online. Paper surveys were available at in-person engagement events, as well as other DLMSt events. The survey had 10 questions and was open for 18 weeks, closing to the public in June 2023. In total, it received 811 complete responses. The full survey can be found in the Appendix, though key findings are included below. As a note, to keep the number of survey questions manageable and encourage participation, demographic questions were not asked.

- Survey responses were captured from residents of Lenoir, the greater region, and as far as West Virginia, Florida, and California. The zip codes with 5 or more respondents included Lenoir, Granite Falls, Hickory, Boomer, Boone, and Morganton.
- 28% of survey respondents visited Downtown Lenoir every few months over the preceding 12-month period. 32% visited every week.
- Restaurants are the number one thing that bring people Downtown followed by Downtown events, festivals, and shopping.
- Respondents were invited to answer the question, “I would visit Downtown more regularly if _____.” Responses included more amenities and activities for kids, more shopping and dining options, more live events and entertainment, better parking, fewer vacancies, and more consistent business hours.
- Respondents indicated that the top three things that would improve the Downtown experience are entertainment, additional outdoor dining, and public restrooms.
- The three words respondents used most frequently to describe Lenoir were quaint, boring, and potential.
- Respondents were asked what three things should be prioritized in planning for the future of Downtown Lenoir. Attracting new businesses was the number one response, receiving 60% of all responses. Programming/entertainment and creating vibrant public spaces followed with 40% of all responses.

In addition to the survey, the plan benefited from a Facebook post that went viral locally. The post, which featured a photo of a Downtown street, void of people, on a Saturday morning, was a call for residents to engage more directly with the Downtown. It was shared four times and in total received over 1,000 comments. Similar to the survey, comments touched on the need for amenities and activities for kids, a desire to convert the one-way streets to two-way, more consistent business hours, additional and more diverse shops and restaurants, more live music, a reactivated Center Theater, and increased tourism.

The information gathered during engagement, including the survey responses and social media comments, were considered throughout the planning process. This anecdotal information was combined with research and analysis to ensure that the recommendations made were both sound from a planning perspective and in alignment with broader public sentiment.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Existing amenities, services, and land uses create opportunities for growth in Lenoir's Downtown. The amount and quality of City-owned properties, including The Campus, the OVT Pavilion site, and the city-owned building located at 1129 West Avenue (City Building 1129), the former Lenoir Emergency Outreach Shelter (LEOS), offers opportunities for thoughtful redevelopment that will result in increased pedestrian flow to and within the Downtown area. Improving walkability and building links between the Downtown's outer edges and Central Square will support pedestrian flow, as will improved safety and visibility on the OVT and additional community uses at The Campus. Festivals, events, and pop-ups can function as placemaking tools, bringing definition to the open spaces where they are held and further establishing Downtown as a vibrant, flexible space that is open to residents and visitors alike. Opportunities also exist to build on the Downtown's unique business array (not every community has a salt cave, a meadery, and a cat café) through the creation of sub-districts.

Missing pedestrian connections, both within Downtown and to amenities just outside the Downtown boundaries like to J.E. Broyhill Park, constrain activity and access. Streetwall gaps and inactive frontages, including vacant and underutilized properties, constrain walkability and visitor interest in active storefronts and Downtown as a whole. Speeding traffic and one-way streets further constrain walkability and make it easier for vehicles to pass through, not stop in, Downtown. At The Campus, a lack of ADA compliant access and seating at Mack Cook Stadium limits visitors who can attend and dissuades events coordinators from booking the Stadium. Parking, which is currently limited to on-street parking nearby, limits the size of events that can be held.

The opportunities and constraints are further summarized to the right.

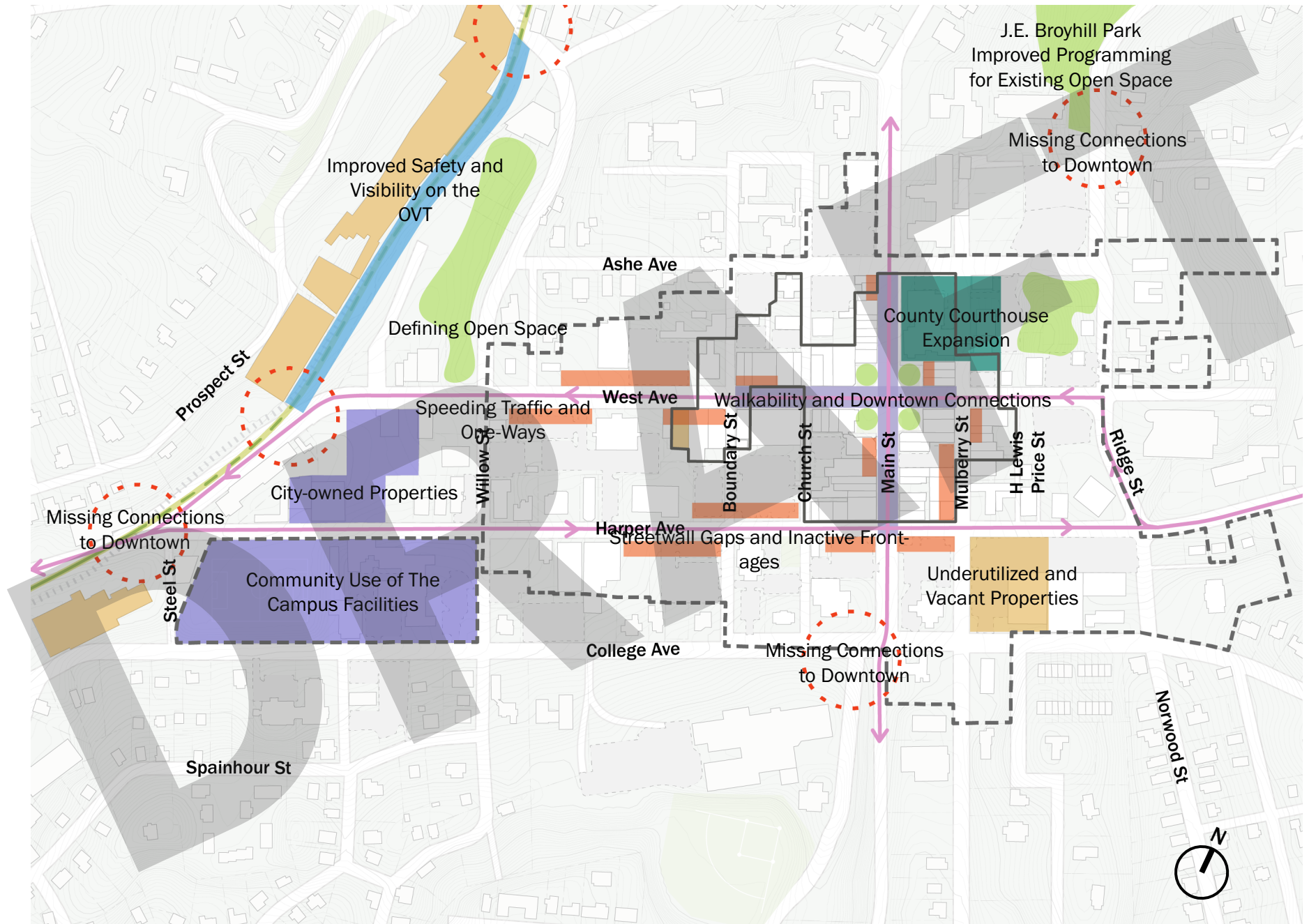
Opportunities

- The OVT
- Unique businesses
- City-owned properties, including The Campus
- The resurgence of Downtown Lenoir
- Public arts and live music
- A walkable Downtown
- Improved connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods
- Caldwell County Courthouse expansion
- Underutilized/private owned properties
- Sufficient inventory of existing parking
- Downtown Historic District
- Municipal Service District
- ABC Social District
- Demand for mixed-income housing
- Return of multi-family housing and recent private investment
- Key employers and anchor tenants

Constraints

- Speeding traffic
- Underutilized vacant properties
- Lack of public open spaces within Downtown
- Lack of family entertainment opportunities
- Lack of affordable and mixed-income housing supply
- The Downtown donut created by West Avenue NW's and Harper Avenue's one-way traffic patterns

Opportunities and Constraints

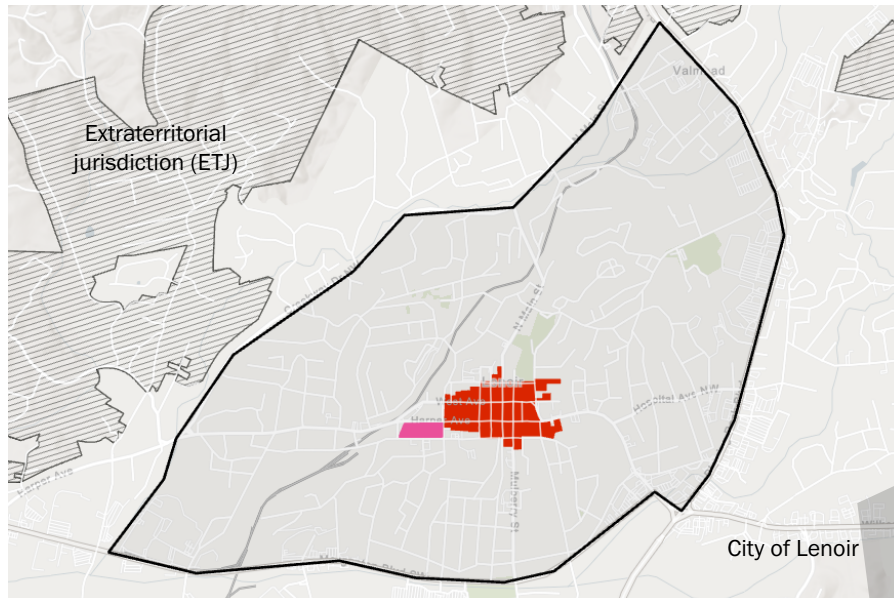




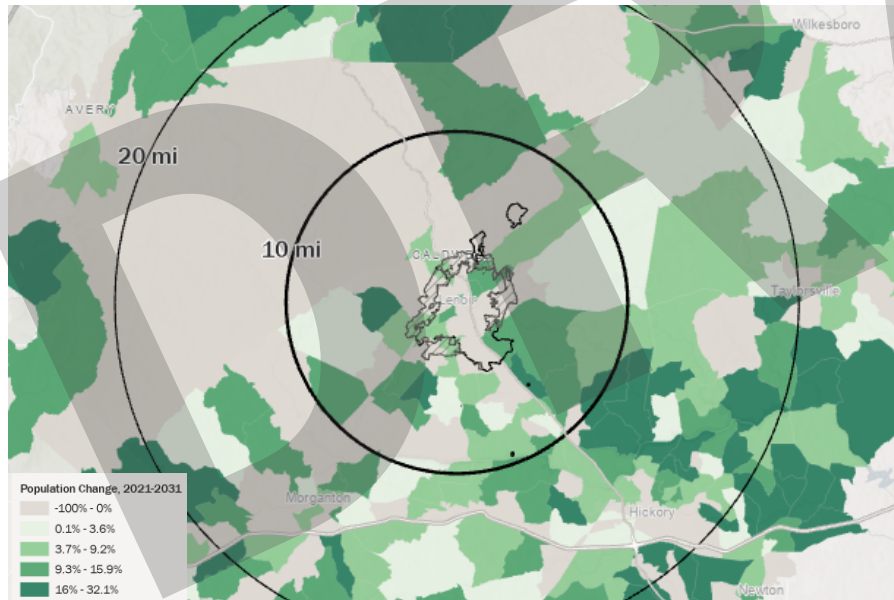
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MARKET AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

DRAFT



Boundaries of the census tract that includes Downtown Lenoir Historic District (shown in red) and The Campus (shown in pink).



Regional Population Growth, 2021-2031

MARKET AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

Planning for the future of Downtown Lenoir requires an understanding of population trends and projections. Regional demographics were studied at the block group level within a 10-mile and 20-mile radius of Lenoir City Hall to understand who lives in Lenoir and could feasibly visit Downtown. Data was collected from census data from the 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, which estimate demographics using 5 years of representative survey data. MySidewalk projections for population change to 2031 were used for growth estimates. Following are highlights from the findings.

Population Growth, 2021-2031

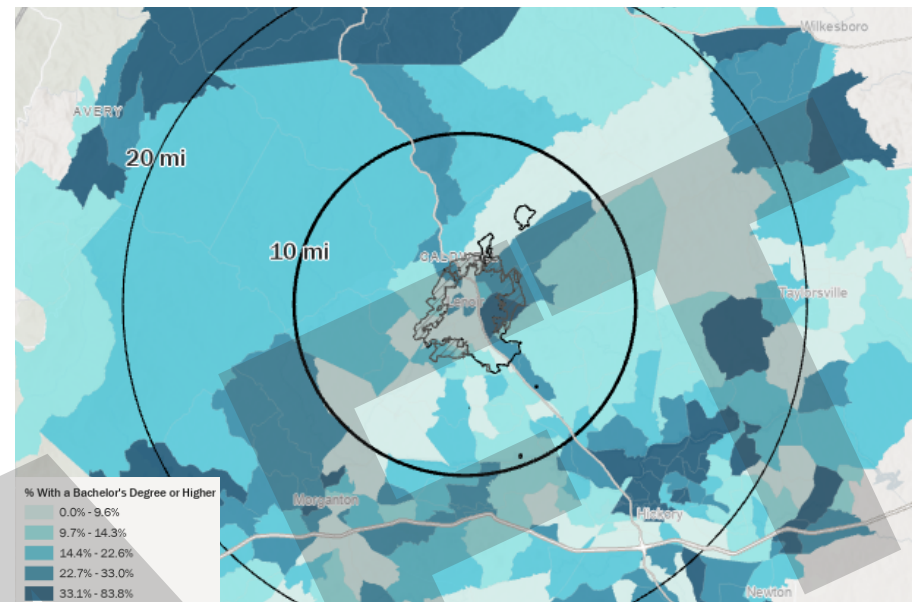
Population growth is projected throughout the region over the next 10 years. Growth projections are statistically modeled on past growth, not indicative or inclusive of planned or spontaneous housing growth. In Lenoir, growth is projected in Downtown, as well as the southwest, southeast, and northeastern corners of the City. The area around the U.S. 321 corridor has the least growth projected. Population growth is studied to best understand where potential new residents would be living and where potential commercial growth may crop up to support new populations.

Percentage of Adults (25+) with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher

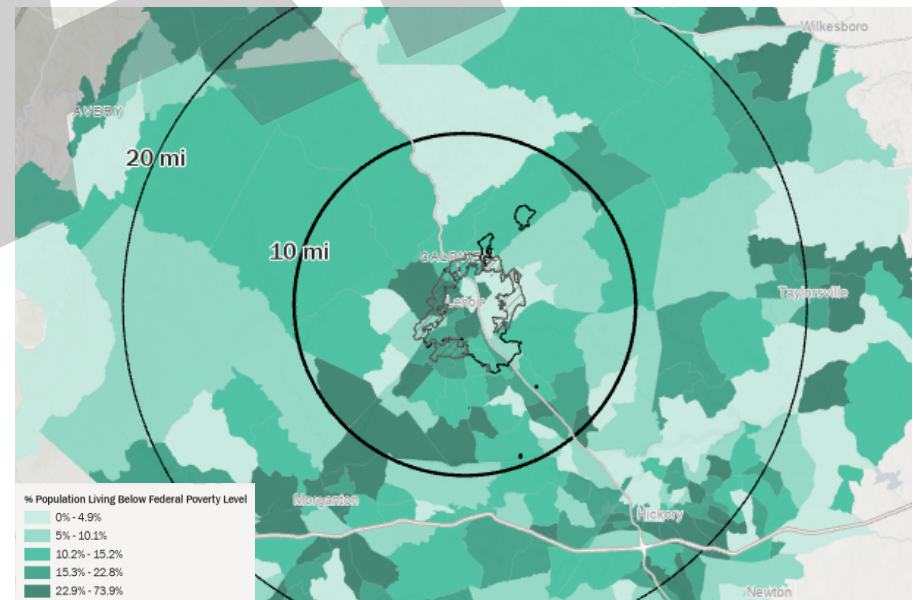
Populations with a bachelor's degree or above in Lenoir are primarily located in the eastern edge of the City. Within the region, higher educational attainment is centered around the 20-mile radius from City Hall in Morganton, Boone, and Hickory. More adults without high school diplomas or GEDs are located within a 10-mile radius of City Hall. Educational attainment is studied to understand the socioeconomic landscape, language used in communication materials, and potential growth locations for adult education and other learning or job training opportunities. This data can also be used to inform festival and event programming and placemaking initiatives, as findings from sources like the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts suggest that educational attainment is the number one indicator of the types of arts and cultural offerings populations are likely to support.

Populations below the Federal Poverty Level

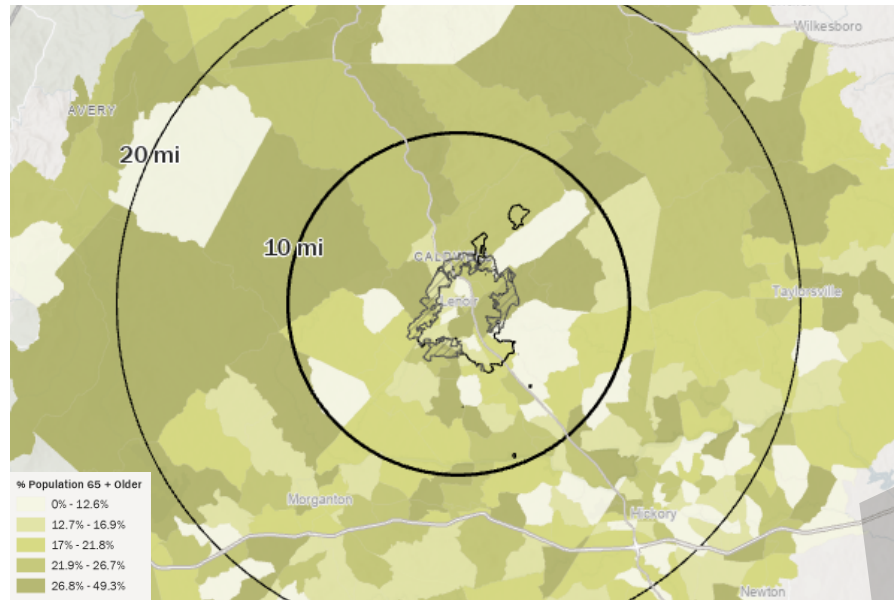
Populations below the federal poverty level are located more in Downtown Lenoir than in other market segments. Poverty levels in the City are on par with those in the 10- and 20-mile radii from City Hall. Populations living below federal poverty level are studied to evaluate purchasing power of potential retail or other commercial activities, interest in lower-cost or free activities, and provision of City, County, or other services.



Percentage of Adults (25+) with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher



Percentage of Population Living Below the Federal Poverty Level



Percentage of the Population Ages 65 and Older



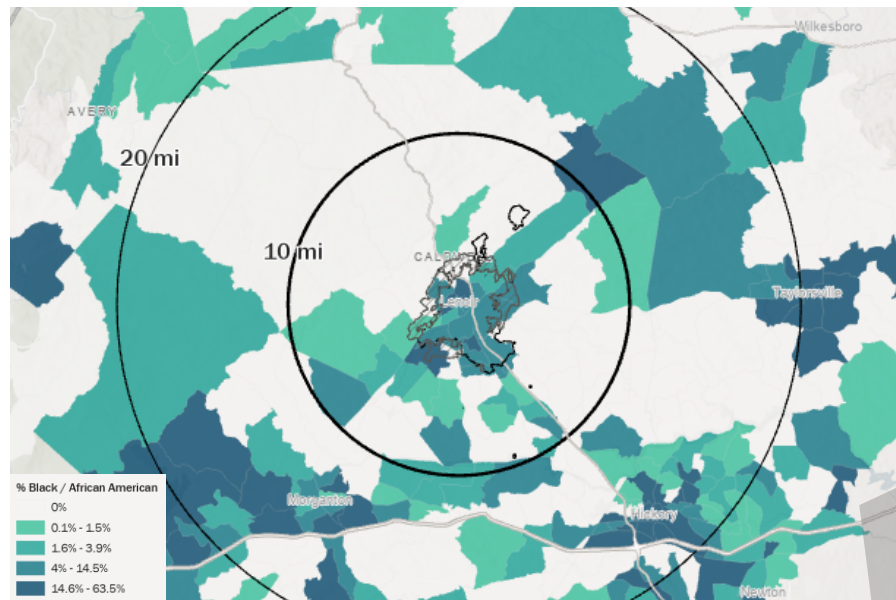
Percentage of Population Ages 19 and Younger

Populations of Color

People of color in the region are more likely to be located in Downtown Lenoir or within City limits; the region as a whole is predominately white. Downtown Lenoir has a significant Hispanic or Latino population (30%) and Black/African American (non-Hispanic) population (10%) compared to the region as a whole. Race and ethnicity are studied to understand Downtown and regional diversity, as well as to contextualize our engagement efforts to better reach residents of color.

Age (Youth and Seniors)

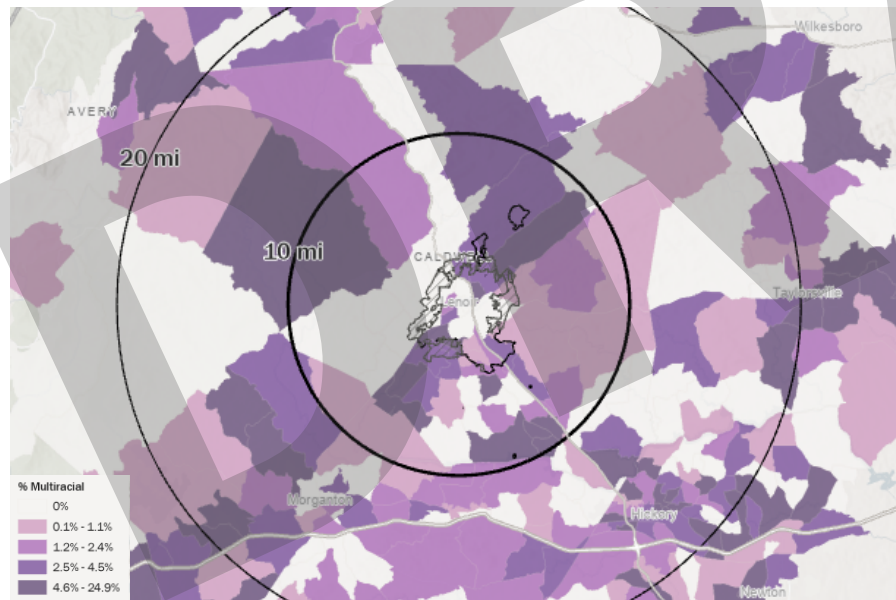
Downtown Lenoir is significantly younger than the surrounding market segments, with nearly 30% of residents aged 18 or younger. Regionally, young people are mostly located in the Hudson area. Downtown Lenoir also has a larger proportion of senior residents ages 65 and over than other market segments in the region. Outside of Downtown, most seniors live in areas to the north and west of Lenoir between 10-20 miles of City Hall.



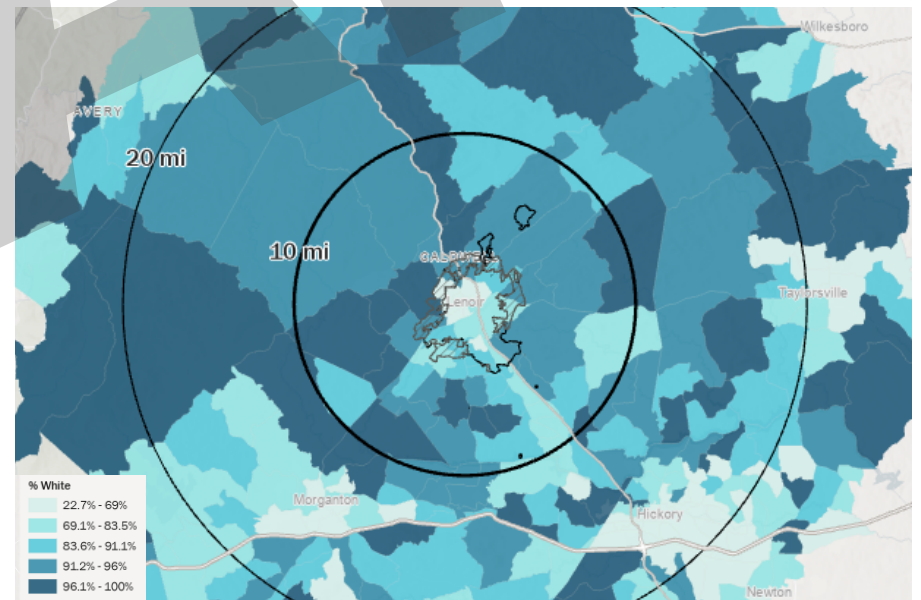
Percentage of Population who are Black/African American (not Hispanic/Latine)



Percentage of Population who are Hispanic/Latine (any race)



Percentage of Population who are Multiracial (not Hispanic/Latine)



Percentage of Population who are white (not Hispanic/Latine)

VisitNC Visitor Activities

In addition to Lenoir, VisitNC's Mountain Region includes the municipalities of Asheville, Black Mountain, Brevard, Hendersonville, Hiddenite, Hot Springs, Lake Lure, Little Switzerland, Marion, Marshall, Morganton, Saluda, and Tryon.

In the greater North Carolina Foothills and Mountain region, Visit NC estimates 12.7 million visitors annually, with 73% staying overnight for an average stay of 3.3 nights. Visitors to the region peak in summer and fall, with 88% of visitors coming for leisure and spending an average of \$662 on their trip. Sixty-two percent (62%) of visitors are married. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of visitors are white, 5% are Black/African American, and 2% are of another race. The average visitor is 47 years old, with an average income of \$88,000. Almost two-thirds of groups of travelers include children under 18.

Visitors to the region rank opportunities to engage with nature higher than their counterparts visiting the NC Coastal or Piedmont regions. Nearly 30% of visitors went to historic sites, and roughly one-quarter of visitors went hiking, visited friends or family, and went sightseeing in rural areas.

Top Activities Participated in by Overnight Regional Visitors in 2021 in the Mountain Region

Replicated from VisitNC.

Historic sites	28.8%
Rural sightseeing	26.7%
Visiting friends/relatives	25.6%
Hiking/Backpacking/Canyoneering	22.7%
Shopping	21.5%
State park/Monuments/Recreation areas	17.2%
Fine dining	15.1%
Local/folk arts/crafts	14.7%
Wildlife viewing	14.7%
National park/Monuments/Recreation areas	14.3%
Museums	13.5%
Casino/Gaming	12.3%
Craft breweries	12.2%
Gardens	11.7%
Urban sightseeing	10.5%
Nature travel/Ecotouring	10.4%
Other nature (photography, rockhound, etc.)	9.2%
Art Galleries	7.0%
Fishing	5.2%
Rock/Mountain climbing	4.2%





4

PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

DRAFT

PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Based on the existing conditions analysis of the Downtown and the synthesis of the community feedback received throughout the planning process, five distinct themes emerged as being key to the continued success and revitalization of Downtown Lenoir and The Campus. These five themes also encapsulate the unique history and authenticity of the City. The Plan recommendations, and their implementation through various projects, initiatives, and actions, should adhere to these broad planning and design principles. These include:

1. Programming

- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Focused on the demographic characteristics of the region and the city
- Focused on arts, culture, heritage, and what is uniquely Lenoir
- Activities for children/families



El Paseo Drive, Palm Desert, CA.

2. Connectivity

- Focus on the pedestrian environment and safety
- Accessibility
- Connect with local, regional, and national trails (Blue Ridge Heritage Trail, OVT)
- Safety and security
- Multi-modal (vehicular, bike, and parking)
- Enhance signage and wayfinding
- Traffic calming
- Neighborhood connections



Murphy Arts District, El Dorado, AR.

3. Mixed-Uses

- Variety of residential options, including mixed-income and affordable housing
- More parks and active open space
- Diversity of restaurants
- Adaptive reuse of second floors and vacant buildings
- Cultural and entertainment facilities
- Access to healthy food (grocery store, farmers' market)

4. Placemaking and Urban Design

- Tactical urbanism
- Placemaking
- Historic preservation
- Landscape and streetscape standards
- 24/7 vibrancy



Public Park Plaza, Alpharetta, GA.

5. Policy and Capacity

- Increase capacity to manage, operate, program, and maintain the Municipal Service District, Downtown, and The Campus
- Communication modes
- Fundraising and capital campaigns
- Policy implementation



Gateway, Roosevelt Road, Chicago, IL.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

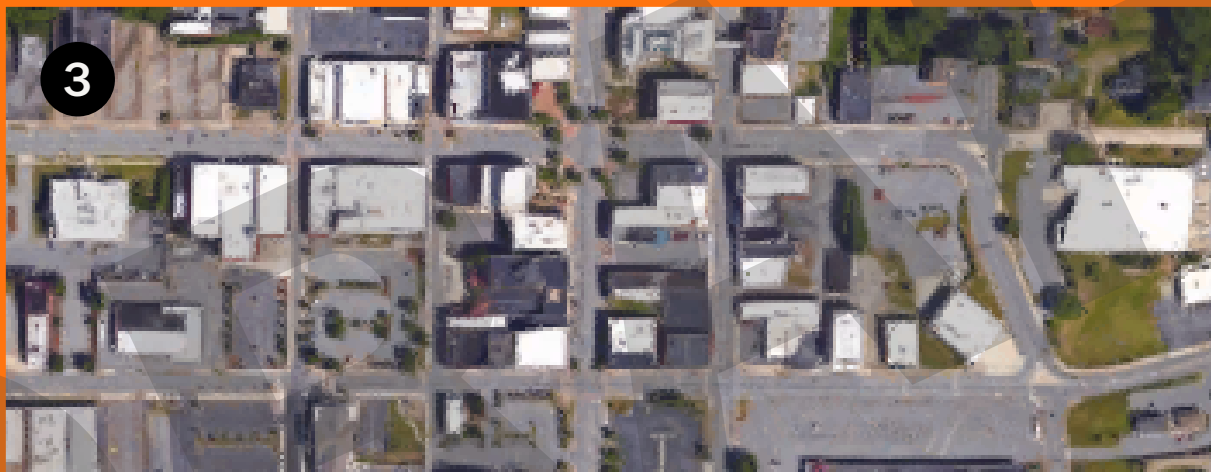
The Plan recommendations are organized into four development frameworks that are intended to guide the development of the Downtown. This framework provides an organizing structure with flexibility to accommodate future change. These elements are aligned with the planning and design principles highlighted on the previous page.

Downtown Districts

The Plan includes recommendations for four unique districts within the Downtown. These districts include:

1. West District (which includes The Campus)
2. North District
3. Downtown District
4. Mulberry Street Mixed-Use District (South District)





MIXED-USE, ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE PROGRAMMING

The mixed-use, arts, culture, and heritage programming framework includes the following recommendations:

1. Distinct Downtown Districts with Design Guidelines

The Plan recommends the creation of four distinct districts within the Downtown. These separate districts can be developed with streetscape design guidelines and projects that uniquely identify and acknowledge their history and role within the Downtown. Façade improvement incentives should continue to be provided to the property owners in these districts to help revitalize facilities and spaces.

2. Mixed-Use Anchors and Adaptive Reuse Projects

The Plan highlights a few major existing facilities within the Downtown that are priority candidates for adaptive reuse/renovation or redevelopment. These facilities include the Center Theater, the Harper Band Building, and the former Walgreens on Harper Avenue and Mulberry Street.



Optimist Hall, Charlotte, NC.

3. Strategic Mixed-Use Developments

This framework identifies various vacant and underutilized lots and publicly- or privately-owned properties that can be targeted to incentivize mixed-use development or redevelopment within Downtown.

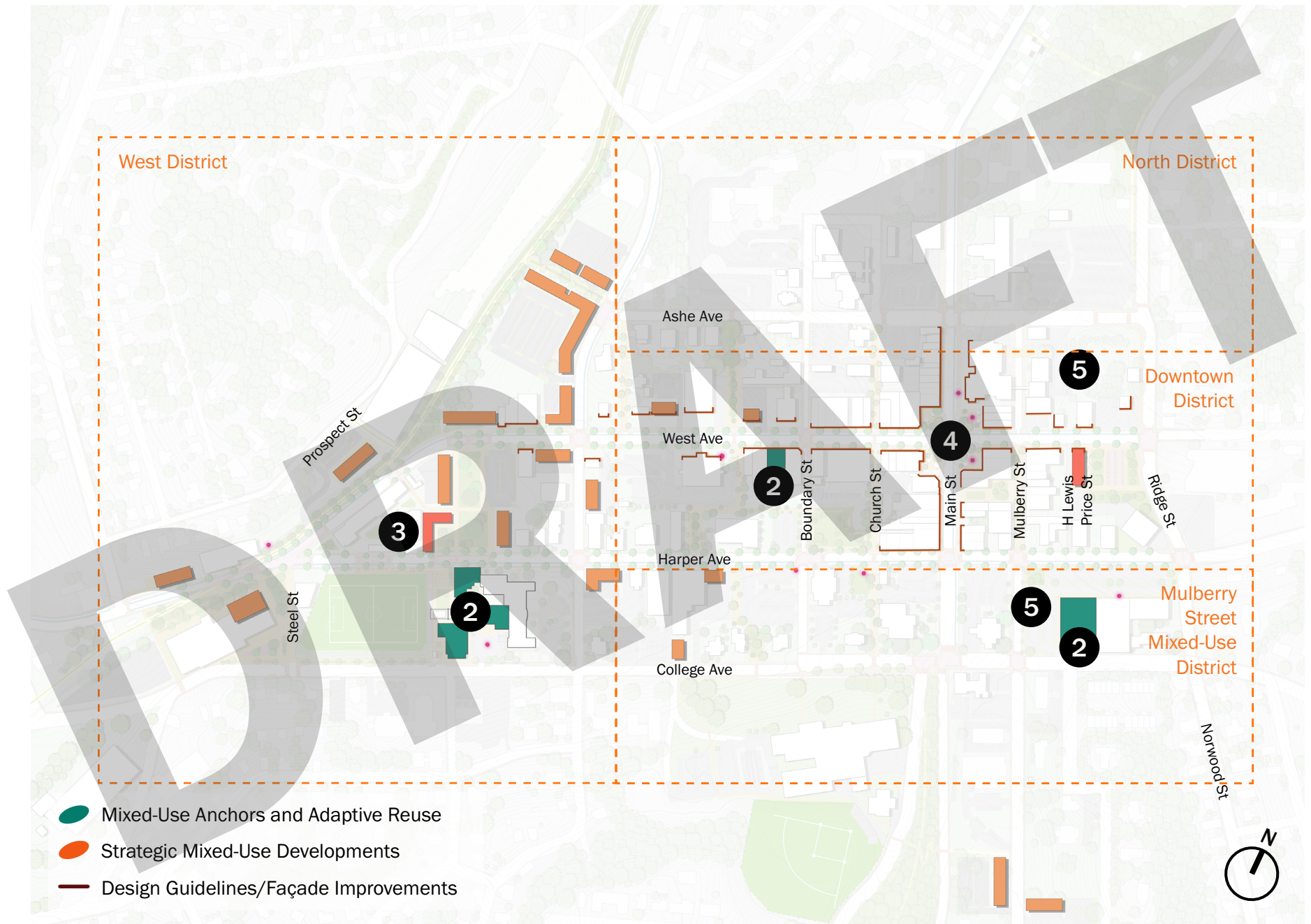
4. Arts, Culture, and Heritage Trail

A new arts, culture, and heritage trail that ties in various historic landmarks and facilities, The Campus, public art installations, and monuments within the Downtown is proposed to help reinvigorate the pedestrian environment and serve as a tool to attract residents and visitors. The trail can provide physical wayfinding to residents and visitors and could be augmented by a digital application or brochure that incentivizes participation through passports, scavenger hunts, or prizes.

5. Design Review for the Proposed County Courthouse Expansion Project

Caldwell County is currently considering a plan to relocate and/or expand the County Courthouse. City of Lenoir staff, along with the planning team, met with County leadership and the architecture firm that is evaluating sites for the new building. Two options are under consideration: one proposes expanding the existing facility at its current site, while the other proposes building a new Courthouse elsewhere in the Downtown.

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming



MULTI-MODAL CIRCULATION, CONNECTIVITY AND PARKING

The multi-modal circulation, connectivity and parking framework includes the following recommendations:

1. Complete Streets

The Plan proposes converting West and Harper Avenues to Complete Streets. Doing so would result in two-way traffic lanes, on-street parking on both sides of the avenues, two-way bike lanes, and wider sidewalks. The streets would include streetscape, pedestrian lighting, traffic calming bump outs and pedestrian crossings at major intersections, and paved crosswalks. The intention is to make these streets pedestrian friendly and safe. The Plan also recommends increasing tree cover and removing the diagonal car parking along West Avenue between Main and Mulberry Streets. The Complete Streets improvements for Harper and West Avenues will improve east to west pedestrian and trail connections.



El Paseo Drive, Palm Desert, CA.

2. Parking

The Plan ensures adequate parking supply within the Downtown core and The Campus. To support special Downtown activities and events, the City should consider partnering with adjacent private surface parking lot owners (including churches) to develop a shared parking policy. Such a policy could include establishing a permitting process for overnight parking on public surface lots.

Currently, the City is evaluating the strategic acquisition of parking lots to increase the supply of surface parking near The Campus.

3. North-South Greenways

Pedestrian and service-only alleyways are proposed as greenways for pedestrian walkability across the Downtown. North-south pedestrian connections are encouraged through these greenways, helping to break up the Downtown's larger blocks. Greenways will include landscaping, art, lighting, outdoor seating, and so on to promote activity and programming.

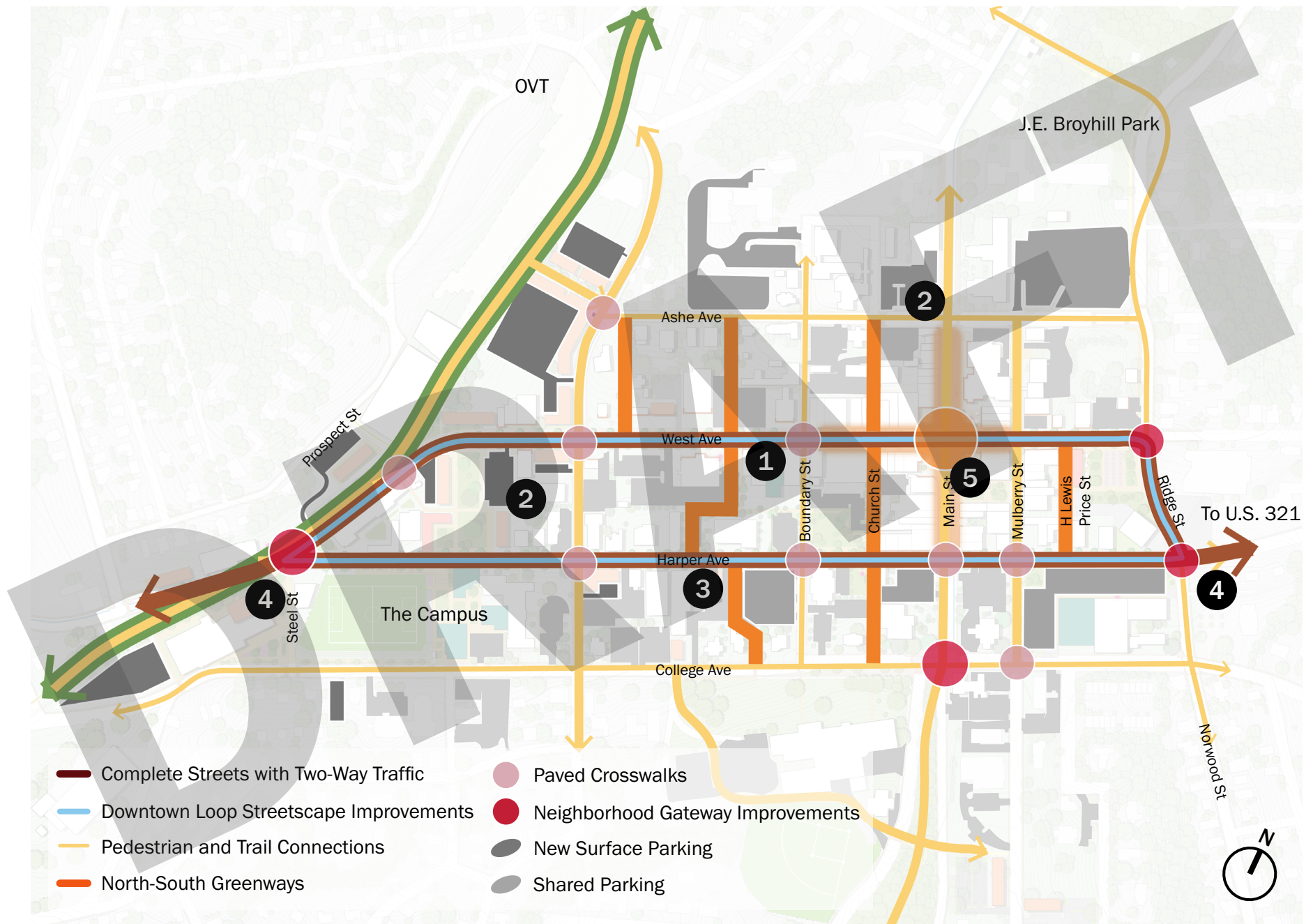
4. Neighborhood Gateway Improvements

Neighborhood gateway improvements are recommended at key neighborhood streets that connect the Downtown with the surrounding city neighborhoods. These gateway improvements will include signage and wayfinding at key locations. The City should also prepare a separate detailed plan for improving signage, wayfinding, and the visibility of Downtown along Harper Avenue from U.S. 321 since that is a major gateway to the Downtown for residents and visitors.

5. Open Streets Programming

The Plan allows for the closure of major streets for Downtown events and festivals while still providing access to service and emergency vehicles. If desired, the City could consider implementing a street closure schedule for specific days of the month to encourage pedestrian activity around the Central Square.

Multi-Modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking





Post Alley, Seattle, WA.



Plaza at Avalon, Alpharetta, GA.

PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE AND THE PUBLIC REALM

The placemaking, open space, and the public realm framework includes the following recommendations:

1. New Public Open Spaces

The Plan proposes three major public open spaces within the Downtown area. These parks will include landscaping, lighting, placemaking elements, and year-round, family-oriented programming activities. The proposed parks include:

- **Gateway Park (A)**
A new gateway park at the corner of Ashe Avenue and Ridge Street.
- **Harper Avenue Park (B)**
A new park at the northeast corner of Boundary Street and Harper Avenue.
- **New Community Park (C)**
A new park facing the Harper Band Building between West Avenue and Harper Avenue (City-owned land).

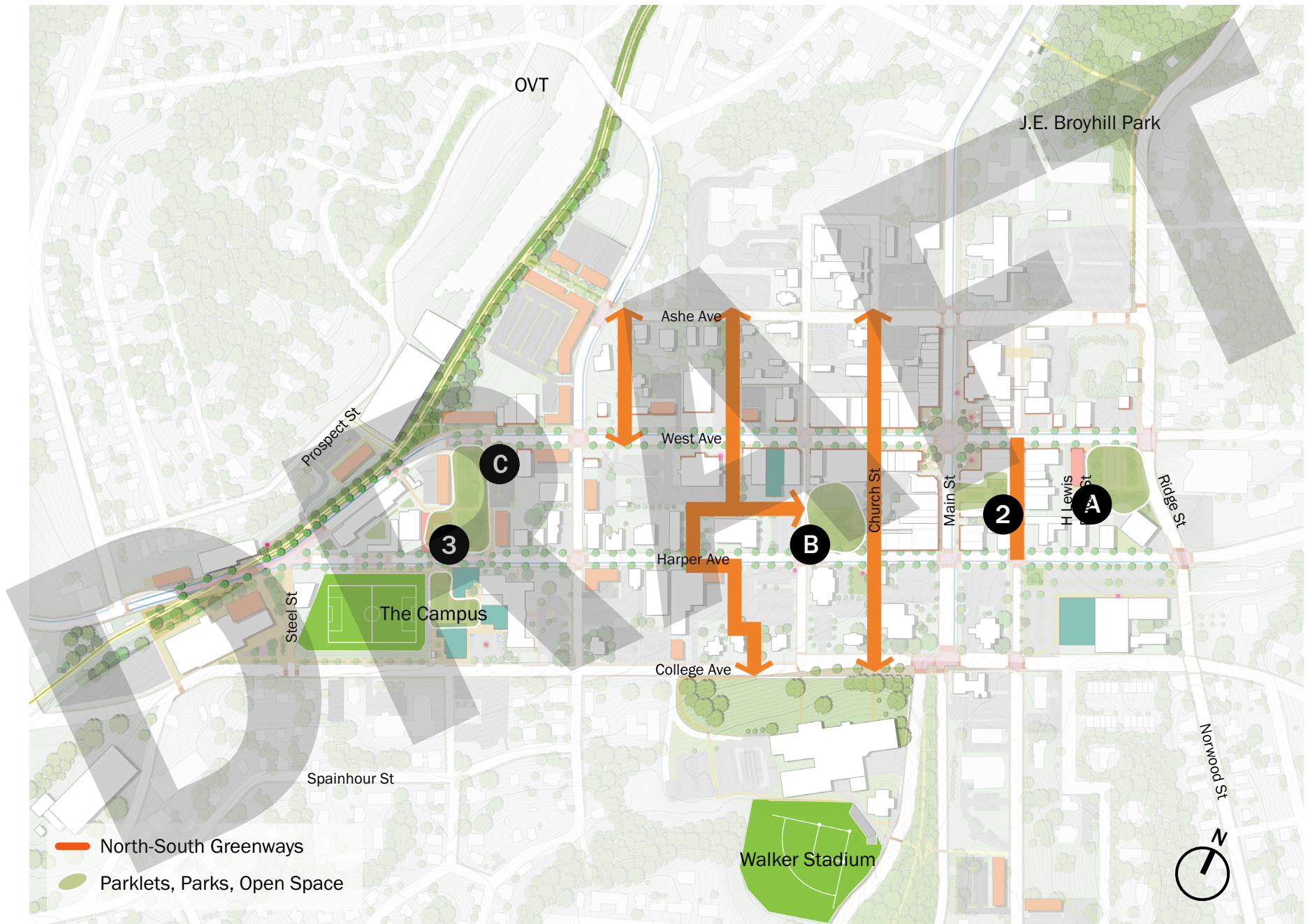
2. Parklets and Outdoor Seating Program

In addition to the parks outlined above, the City should explore creating parklets. This could be done through a parklet program or in collaboration with the holders of privately-owned areas Downtown. Preferably, these parklets would be close to the proposed North-South Greenways when possible.

3. OVT Program

A new community pavilion is proposed in front of the Harper Band Building where a shed currently stands. This pavilion will be programmed for community-oriented uses including serving as an information center for OVT users and visitors. The pavilion can be designed and developed through a community outreach process that informs ideas on its use and programming.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm



POLICY AND CAPACITY

The policy and capacity development framework includes the following recommendations:

1. Capacity Building

As Downtown continues to see a resurgence in development, DLMSt will need to increase its operating capacity. An increase in personnel and funding will enable the program to effectively operate and manage The Campus, coordinate with Parks and Recreation and Public Works, and support Downtown programming, outreach, operations, and maintenance. The City will need to increase its marketing, communication, and neighborhood outreach efforts to involve neighborhood residents and organizations in the activities of the Downtown. Strategic partnerships with the private sector also need to be enhanced to explore public-private partnerships for leveraging investments and improvements within Downtown.

2. Economic Development

Additional energy and effort will be needed within the City and Caldwell County Economic Development to actively scout for and recruit developers and employers interested in becoming part of Lenoir's Downtown development. The following specific actions are recommended as part of this plan to encourage private investment:

- **Vacant Building Ordinance**
Initiate an ordinance to encourage the redevelopment and/or adaptive reuse of older vacant buildings within the Downtown area.
- **Strategic Acquisition/Development of Properties to Advance Priorities**
The City should continue to acquire properties that become available in the real estate market to advance strategic priorities.
- **Incentivize Multi-family, Mixed-income Residential Developments**
More mixed-income, affordable, and workforce housing is needed Downtown. The City should consider providing density and/or parking incentives to encourage private investment.

3. Arts and Culture

Lenoir's unique heritage should be highlighted through a focus on arts and cultural programming. The City might consider the creation and adoption of a public art policy or broader arts and cultural master plan.

4. Land Use and Zoning Overlays

The plan recommends the amendment of Downtown's existing zoning to define four Downtown districts: West District (which includes The Campus), Mulberry Street Mixed-Use District, Downtown District, and North District. The overlays could be used to incentivize multi-family affordable housing. Design guidelines could be developed as part of these overlays for each district. The Plan recommends expanding or readjusting the boundaries of the existing Municipal Service District as per the new Downtown districts.

5. Trash Compactor Management

The city is considering revamping the trash collection within Downtown for each collection and disposal without hampering Downtown pedestrian environment and traffic. One of the proposals includes locating and installing trash compactors within five-minute walking distance of Downtown blocks in multiple suitable locations. The Plan framework of districts could be used to evaluate the location of such compactors by the city.

6. Design Review of the County Courthouse

The City should be involved in the design review of the County's Courthouse project. This will ensure that decisions are made that support the Downtown, benefiting and contributing to its future growth and vitality.

7. Vacancy Ordinance Updates

In the short term, the City can identify vacant properties, update and enforce existing ordinances, and launch a task force. Developing a database of vacant, abandoned, or deteriorated (VAD) properties can help the City to understand the nature, extent, and geography of vacancy and abandonment. Updating and enforcing the existing vacancy ordinance will help better align the ordinance with state legislation, create more effective incentives, and establish communication with vacant property owners. Finally, by launching – and holding accountable – a Vacant Properties Task Force can cultivate cross-departmental coordination and ease collaboration with strategic community partners.

Long-term, the City can explore developing a code enforcement system and creating a land bank. A strategic building code and tax enforcement system that adapts a “Fix it Up, Pay it Up, Give it Up” approach can help create an equitable framework geared towards compliance. The City can also build internal capacity to acquire and steward VAD properties on behalf of residents and in partnership with residents for the public good.



West Avenue looking east. (January 23, 2023). DLR Group.



Capitol Theatre renovation, Flint, MI. DLR Group.



J.M. Bernhardt Planing Mill and Box Factory - Steele Cotton Mill, Lenoir, Caldwell County. (August 14, 2016). North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Flickr.



5

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

DRAFT

HIGHLIGHTS

The adjoining illustrative site plan provides a 10-year (and beyond) vision of the Downtown, highlighting major Plan recommendations and projects. These recommendations are described in the four development frameworks highlighted in Chapter 4 as well as in the specific district recommendations that follow.

The included Plan recommendations focus on:

- **Mixed-Use Anchors and Adaptive Reuse**
The redevelopment and/or adaptive reuse of key existing vacant or underutilized buildings into mixed-use anchors.
- **Community-Oriented Pavilions**
The development of community-oriented pavilions (community halls, meeting rooms, visitors' pavilion, etc.) with other commercial and/or retail uses.
- **Strategic Mixed-Use Developments**
Future mixed-use development through incentives or the participation of private property owners.

The Plan provides the following recommendations to achieve these planning goals. They include:

Tactical Urbanism

Many plan recommendations can be tested for their suitability of location by programming pilot projects that use tactical urbanism techniques. Pilot projects are particularly successful when adding new public spaces, considering open street programming, temporarily closing vehicular traffic, or implementing other such improvements as they have lower thresholds for funding, policy and guideline development, and so on.

Improve Downtown's Central Square

The hardscaping and landscaping around Central Square needs to be improved. Changes should include moving the existing donation pavers to a vertical wall arrangement to mitigate wear and tear and to improve visibility and increasing occupiable green space. The vertical sculpture with memorial pieces is currently in production. Green space and other public realm improvements in corner parks should be welcoming to passersby and flexible to support events or festivals Downtown.

Downtown Lenoir, Illustrative Aerial View





reuse
villions
ments
movements

Percent for Art Program

The City should consider instituting a percent for art policy to encourage the creation and installation of public art Downtown. These policies vary from community to community but, typically, require that between 1% and 2% of the construction or renovation budget of buildings be used to acquire public art. The policies can apply to publicly- or privately-financed projects. In developing a percent for art policy, the City of Lenoir should review the policies of other communities to determine which parameters make the most sense for Downtown Lenoir. The City of Lenoir's policy should then be developed in collaboration with the City Attorney. The City may also decide to work with a public art planning consultant to develop a public art master plan that could include the framework for a Percent for Art policy as well as a plan for caring for and maintaining the City's growing public art collection.

Small Business Program

DLMSt should work with the Downtown business community to improve the coordination of operating hours, increase the activities of the Lenoir-Caldwell Chamber of Commerce, and organize a task force for coordinating various Downtown initiatives.

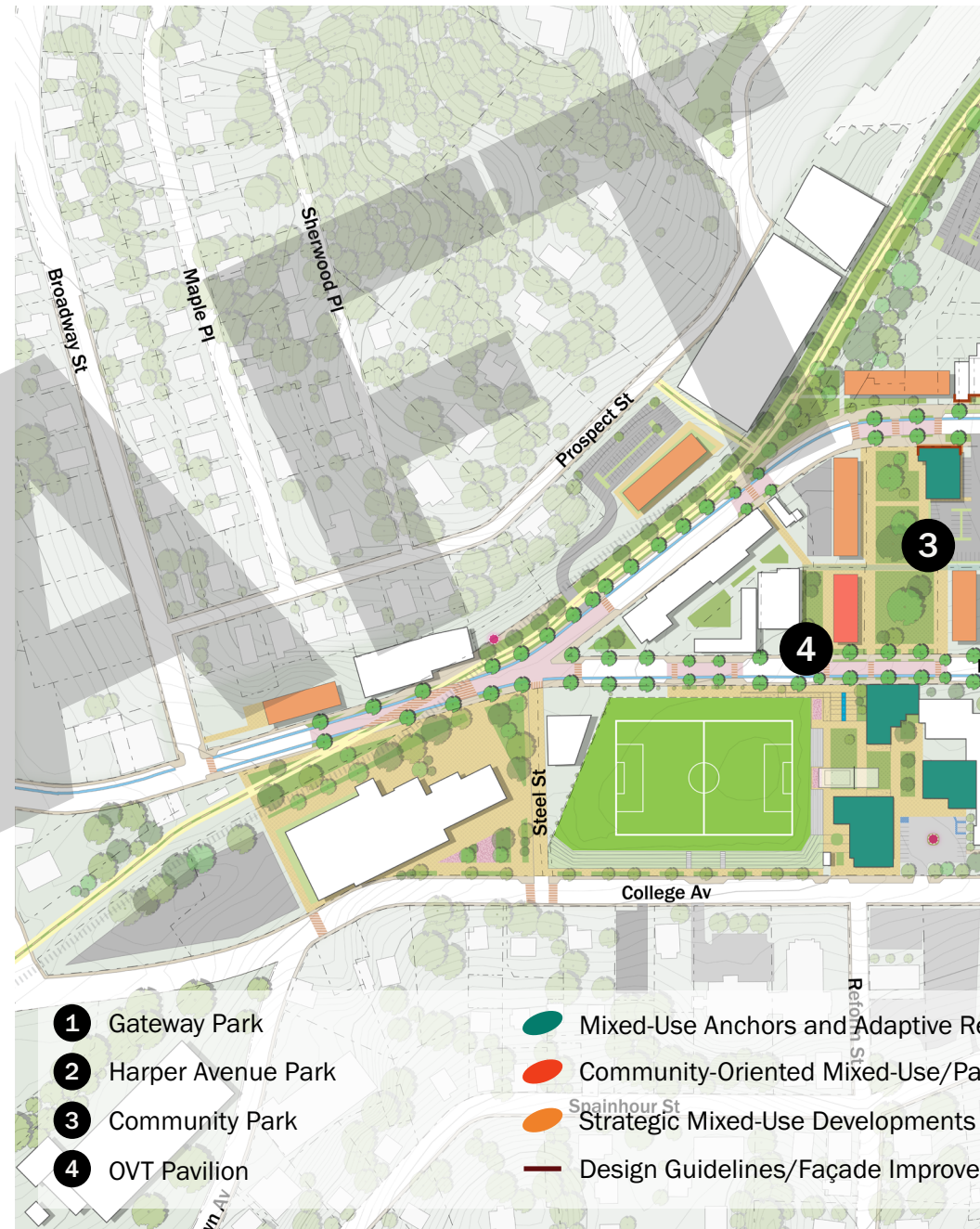
Revise and Relaunch Moving Lenoir to the Second Floor

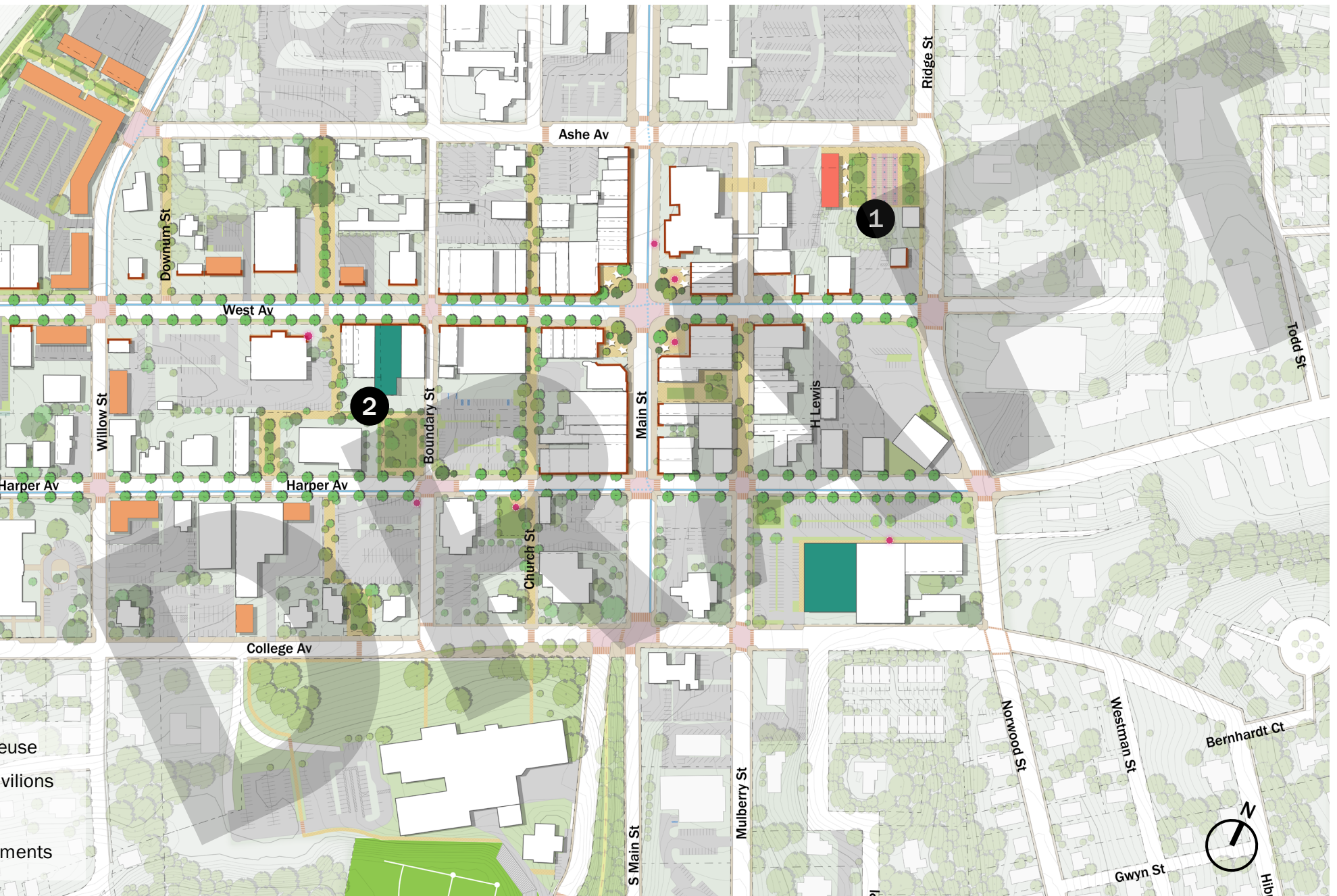
The Moving Lenoir to Second Floor initiative aimed to provide property owners with technical assistance and funding to convert the second floors of their buildings to residential use. The program received a 2018 Best Innovation Award from the NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center. While the project was largely successful, some areas of improvement were identified and there are still multiple properties Downtown where second floor conversion would be beneficial. This Plan recommends that the program continue with a revised matching funds component to improve incentive structures and increase the threshold of participation.

Façade Improvements

DLMSt should implement and encourage façade improvements in the Downtown Historic District. New buildings can be consistent with existing structures. To attract new development, DLMSt should market Downtown more to acquire an anchor tenant, such as a new hotel, which could be run by a local college's hospitality students.

Downtown Lenoir, Illustrative Site Plan





WEST DISTRICT

The following provides highlights of the Plan recommendations for the West District that follow the overall planning and design principles and development framework.

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

Private Mixed-Use Development (Future)

The redevelopment of The Campus buildings and Mack Cook Stadium's use as a multi-purpose venue, will help to catalyze the redevelopment of privately owned properties in the future. The Plan recommends incentives to make this possible for a variety of mixed uses including residential, commercial, and retail.

OVT Pavilion

A new OVT Pavilion is proposed to replace the existing City-owned shed. This pavilion can be used for community-oriented programs as well as a multi-purpose public space that is suitable for community events, meetings, an information center for visitors, public restrooms, storage, etc. The pavilion will face the Harper Band Building and will anchor the community park that has been proposed adjacent to the building.

Multi-Modal Circulation, Connectivity and Parking

OVT and West and Harper Avenues Complete Streets

The Plan recommends multi-modal improvements to enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation, traffic calming, and connectivity within the West District, particularly for streets within walking distance of The Campus. These improvements include the continuation of the West and Harper Avenues Complete Street improvements, the addition of on-street parking (where missing) and improving the pedestrian and bicycle connections to the OVT.

Pedestrian Crossings and Improvements

The Plan highlights places to widen sidewalks with bump outs for traffic calming and pedestrian safety. Pedestrian crosswalks can be paved at mid-block locations.

New Parking

The Plan proposes considering adding gravel or paved surface parking lots in the next few years either through the acquisition of vacant lots south of College Avenue or through partnership with property owners. The Plan also highlights future structured parking north of West Avenue taking advantage of the area's topography. Additional surface parking is proposed close to the former LEOS building on City-owned land.

EV Charging Stations

At least five EV charging stations are proposed along West and College Avenues at on-street parking locations. These charging stations will help attract visitors to The Campus and to the West District.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

Community Park

A new community park is proposed facing north of the Harper Band Building in the area between West Avenue and Harper Avenue. This community park will provide much needed public open space for family-oriented programming near The Campus.

Adaptive Reuse of the Former LEOS Building

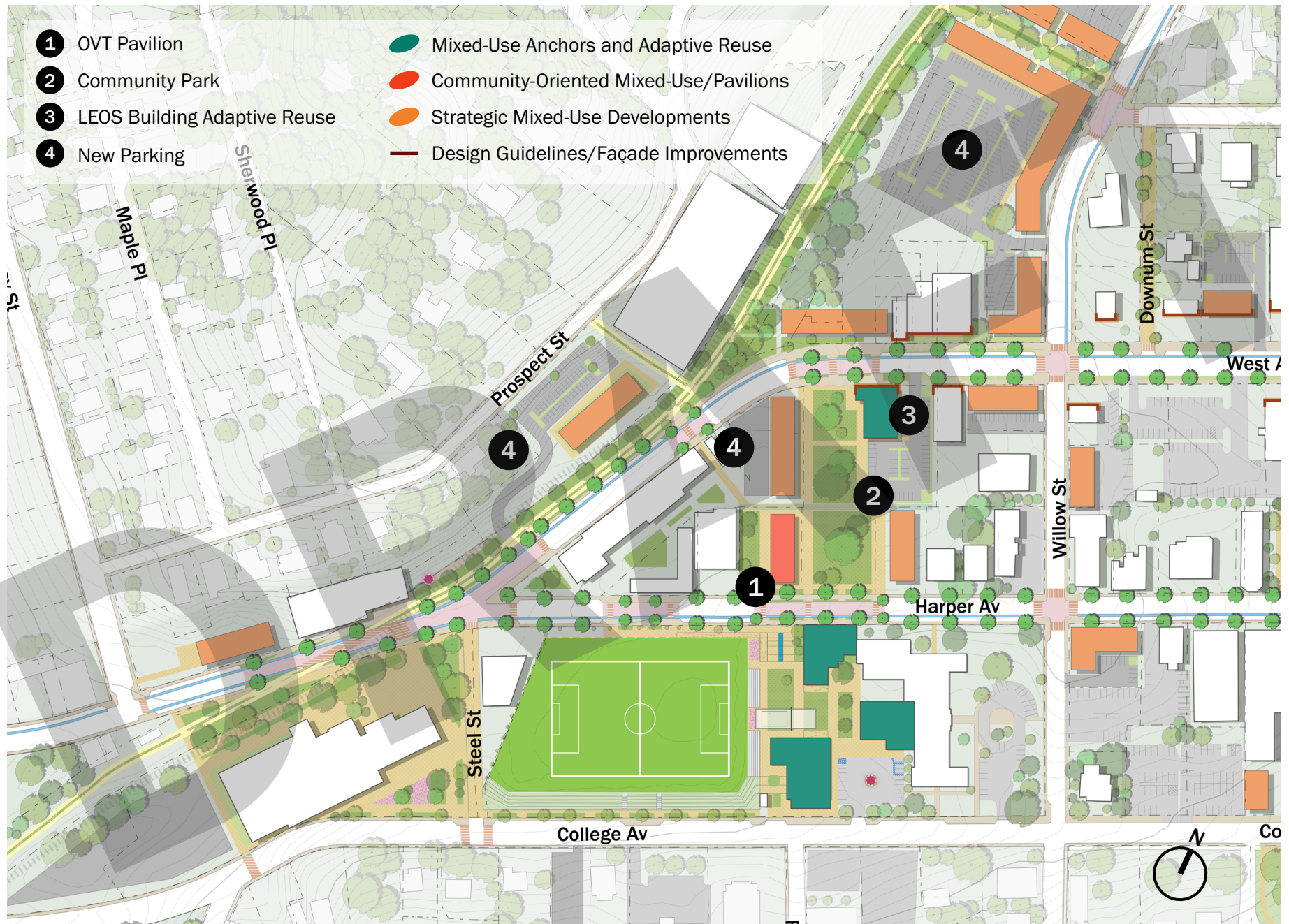
The Plan recommends renovating the former LEOS building to accommodate public restrooms and storage. This building will accommodate community-oriented needs related to various programs and events within the community park.

Policy and Capacity

Management and Operations of The Campus, OVT Pavilion, and the New Community Park

A coordinated and proactive effort will be needed to manage the operations and maintenance of The Campus facilities, Mack Cook Stadium, and other proposed nearby facilities and spaces, including the OVT Pavilion, renovated LEOS facility, and new community park.

West District, Illustrative Site Plan



THE CAMPUS

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

Harper Band Building Adaptive Reuse

The Plan recommends the adaptive reuse of the Harper Band Building. Ideally, any reuse would keep the legacy of the facility intact. At the same time, it is recommended that reuse options include revenue generating and community-oriented uses.

Adjacent diagrams indicate some reuse ideas. The combined effort of re-developing the entire campus area and restoring and reusing the Harper Band Building provides a vision and impetus to undertake a capital campaign. Further facility assessment and market analysis will be needed to finalize the rehabilitation plan for Harper Band Building and should be conducted before a capital campaign is launched. The adaptive reuse of the building will help develop a program for future revenue generating uses within The Campus's other facilities. A new 501(c)(3) organization may be considered to help spearhead the capital campaign, renovation, and programming of the Harper Band Building and even The Campus as a whole.

Auditorium

While the Auditorium has undergone some renovation, additional improvements are needed to its audio-visual technology, lighting, acoustics, back-of-house areas, and seating. The City is considering grants and other funds to implement such improvements.

Gymnasium

The City completed a renovation of the Gymnasium to accommodate a variety of programs and events as a multi-purpose facility.

Stage/Outdoor Pavilion

The Plan recommends a new outdoor stage or pavilion within The Campus that overlooks the Mack Cook Stadium. This pavilion would anchor the outdoor space between the Harper Band Building, Auditorium, and the Gymnasium.

Mack Cook Stadium

Multi-purpose programming of the Mack Cook Stadium is envisioned as part of the overall revitalization of The Campus. As such, ADA improvements are needed in the immediate future. Accessible ramps and elevators are proposed to connect the site's various grade levels (street level, stadium ground, and The Campus facilities). Public restrooms and storage spaces would be provided in the adjacent Harper Band Building, renovated LEOS facility, and in the proposed community pavilion facing the Harper Band Building.

Once fully activated, the coordination of programming, activities, operations, and maintenance between The Campus's various facilities will be essential to its operations.

Multi-Modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

Demolish the Masonry Building and Add New Steps

The Plan recommends the demolition of the existing Masonry Building to provide a direct pedestrian connection to The Campus facilities from Harper Avenue via the addition of steps. These steps, along with an accessibility ramp, will help connect the upper West Avenue level of The Campus facilities with the Mack Cook/Harper Avenue level. The steps will provide visibility to The Campus facilities from Harper Avenue, helping connect the proposed Community Park and the OVT Pavilion facing the Harper Band Building.

Landscaped Terraces and the Harper Avenue Promenade

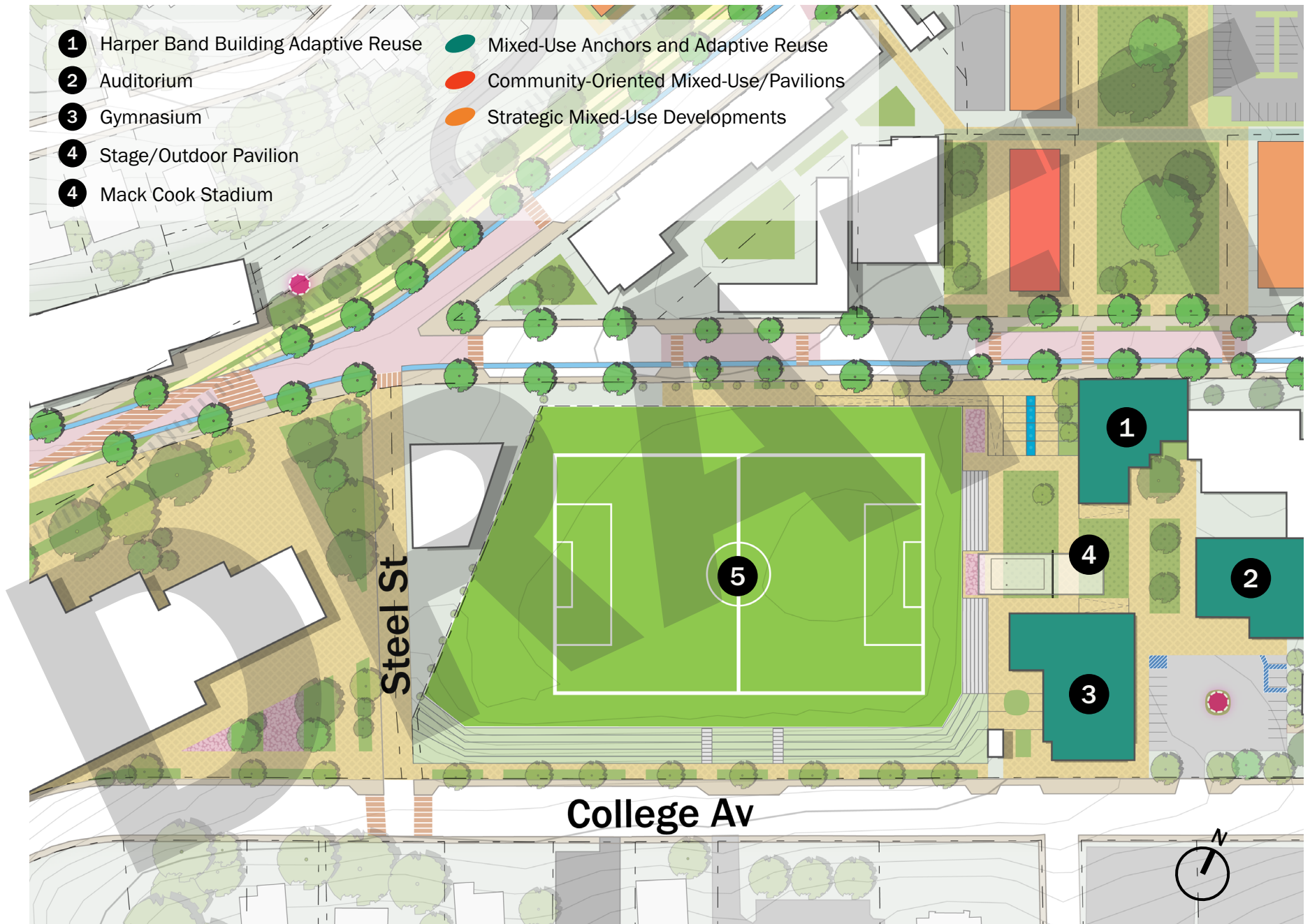
New landscaped seating areas or terraces are proposed along the College Avenue side of the Mack Cook Stadium. These seating areas can be created as landscaped gabions. A new promenade with a wider sidewalk and streetscape is also proposed along West Avenue between Steel Street and the Gymnasium.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

The Campus Landscaping

Additional landscape improvements are recommended to the areas between the Harper Band Building, Auditorium, and Gymnasium facilities.

The Campus, Illustrative Site Plan



The Campus

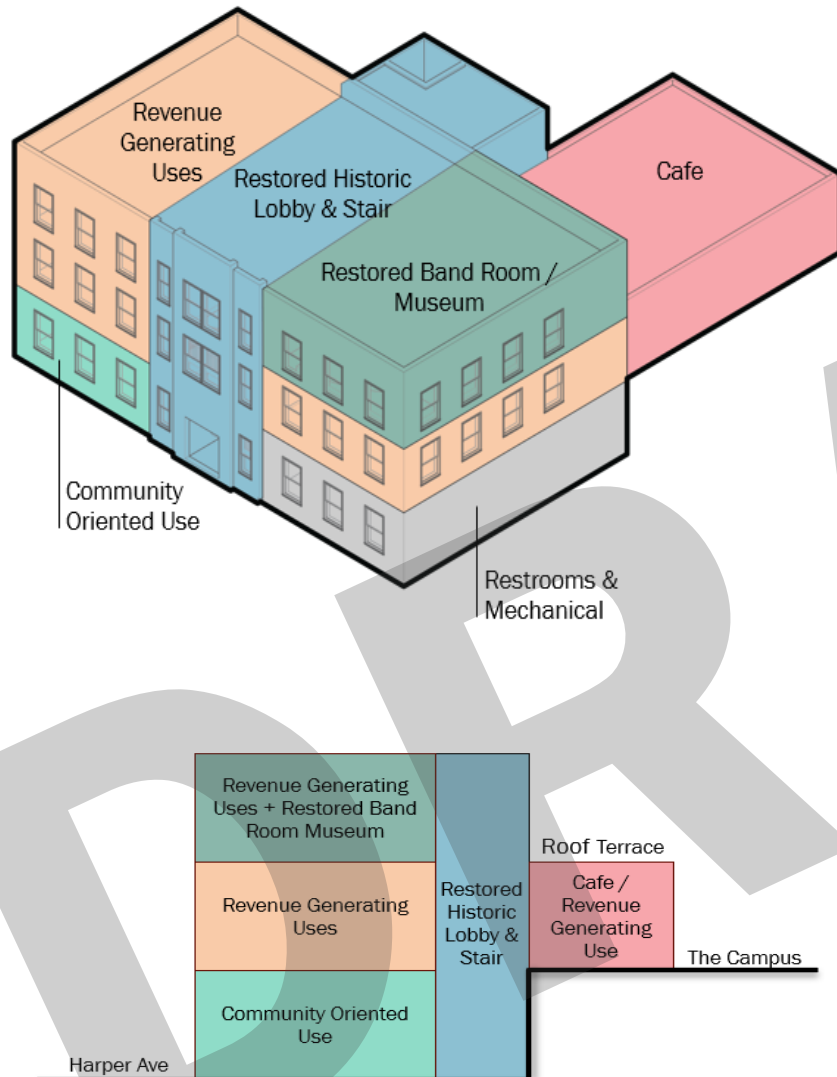


The Campus, Illustrative Aerial View

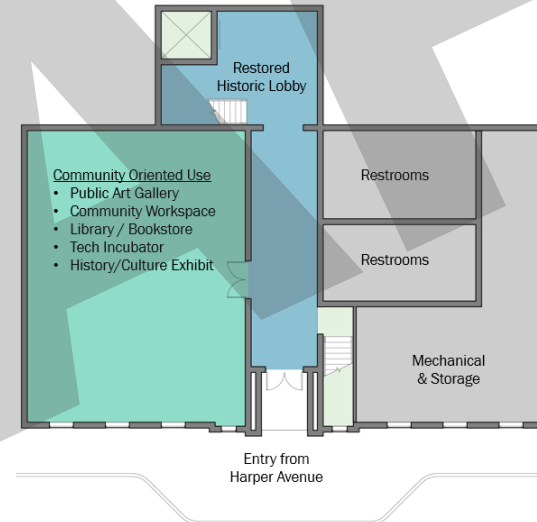
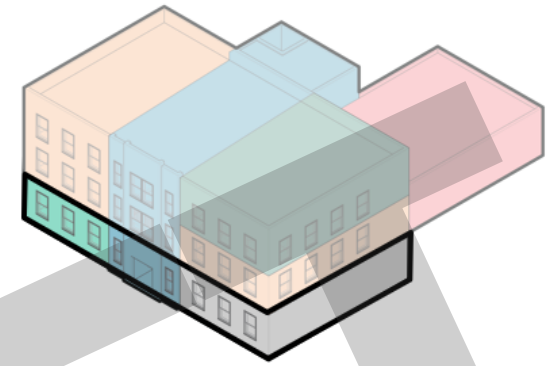


HARPER BAND BUILDING ADAPTIVE REUSE

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

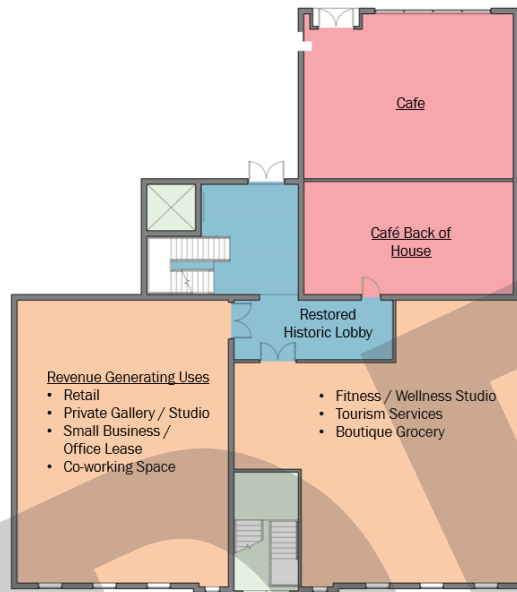
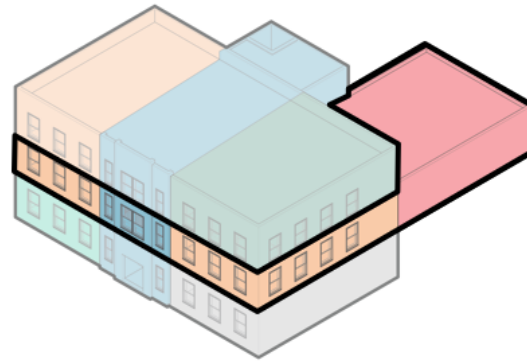


Level 1



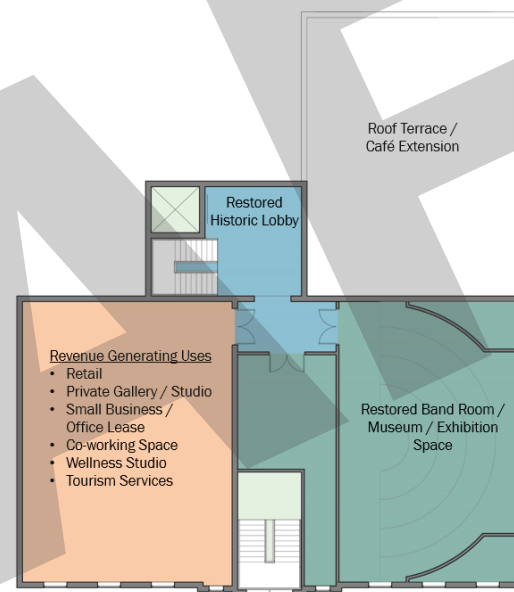
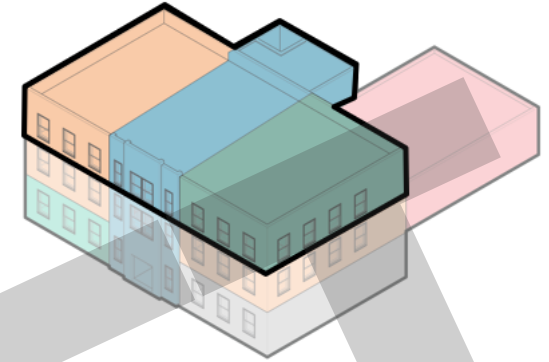
The entry level, Level 1, can include a restored lobby, restrooms, mechanical space, and spaces for community-oriented uses. These uses could include a public art gallery, community workspace, library or bookstore, tech incubator, or a history and culture exhibit.

Level 2



On the second level, a restored lobby can invite visitors into revenue-generating spaces. These spaces could include retail, a private gallery or studio, a small business or office lease, a co-working space, a fitness/wellness studio, tourism services, or a boutique grocery. A cafe on this floor would connect with the plaza level with the rest of The Campus, well-situated to support Mack Cook Stadium.

Level 3



On the third floor, a restored lobby can invite visitors into additional revenue generating uses, similar to those on the second floor. After the band room is restored, the space can be used for performances or museum or exhibition space. Finally, a roof terrace can be created for cafe patrons or other visitors.

NORTH DISTRICT

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

Strategic Mixed-Use Developments

Shown in orange, strategic mixed-use developments will help create a sense of consistency and walkability by filling gaps in the street frontage that are currently occupied by parking spaces. New mixed-use buildings will mesh with existing buildings in the Downtown core, as guided by existing design guidelines.

An Arts and Culture Downtown Trail

An Arts and Culture Trail would highlight Downtown's outdoor sculptures as well as its historic architecture and other artistic and cultural features. Clear wayfinding and branding would make this trail cohesive and clear for visitors.



River Arts District, Asheville, NC.

County Courthouse Community Uses

Additional coordination and discussion is needed between the City and County as the County decides on the location of the County Courthouse expansion. The Plan recommends community oriented uses and ground floor transparency to be considered in the design of the County Courthouse without compromising the security and public safety for the Courthouse. Design reviews and public comments should be considered by the County in partnership with the City to ensure the expansion to be in alignment with the goals and recommendations of this Plan.

Multi-Modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking Improved Pedestrian and Trail Connection from J.E. Broyhill Park

Clear signage and accessible sidewalks will create a stronger connection between Downtown and J.E. Broyhill Park and neighborhoods beyond.

Shared Parking

Existing parking lots are currently privately held and only in use during the property owners' events, leaving them dormant most hours of the week. By sharing parking lots for public use or with new residential developments, people can park at these lots during off-peak hours and the lots would have more use for more time.

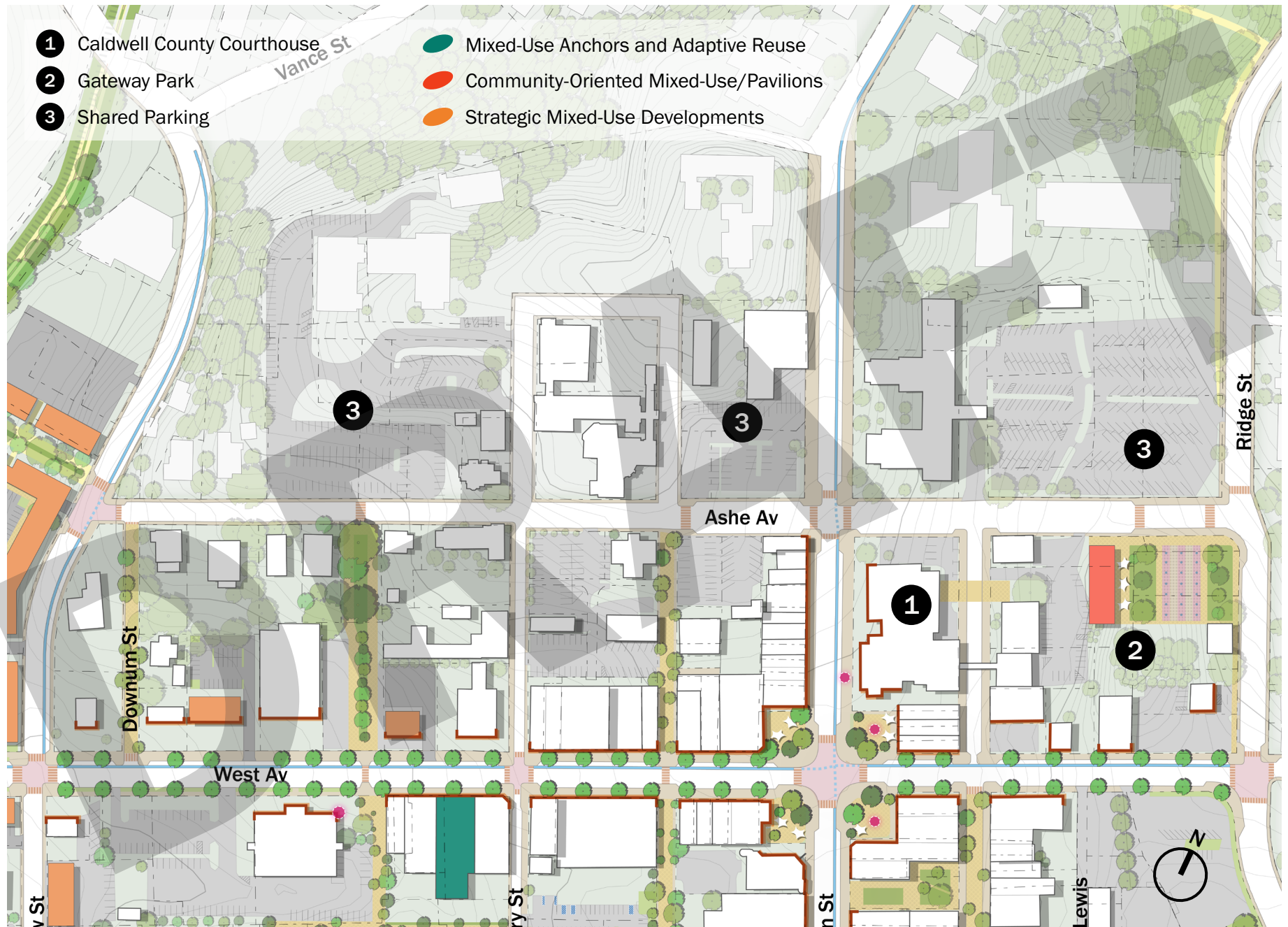
Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm North-South Greenways

North-South Greenways are multiuse paths through Downtown, allowing pedestrians to pass through blocks without traveling along superblocks or parking lots. The shaded, green routes would be accessible and would allow nearby businesses to create off-street eating areas or patios during warmer months.

Policy and Capacity

Incentivizing multi-family, mixed-income residential developments will encourage more residents, more foot traffic, and more spending at small businesses Downtown. These developments would enable existing residents to downsize into apartments or condos: new residents would be able to experience Downtown Lenoir without needing to get into a car, and an increase in residents would result in more activity Downtown.

North District, Illustrative Site Plan



DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

Center Theater

Community members are very interested in seeing the Center Theater revived to provide the indoor entertainment and arts space that the Downtown currently lacks. Adaptive reuse and renovation of the Theater would preserve the built heritage of the building, which is a contributing building to the Downtown Historic District, while also serving the public more broadly. To renovate the Theater, vacancy ordinances should be revised to prohibit longer vacancies and decline. Alternative funding sources, like capital campaigns and Main Street America or National Trust for Historic Preservation funding, should be explored.

Strategic Mixed-Use Developments

Shown in orange, strategic mixed-use developments will help create a sense of consistency and walkability by filling gaps in the street frontage currently occupied by parking spaces. New mixed-use buildings will mesh with existing buildings in the Downtown core, as guided by existing Design Guidelines.

Community-Oriented Mixed-Use

Community-oriented mixed-use development, strategically located near public spaces and gateways, can support public uses while repairing gaps in street frontages and creating new development.

Multi-Modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking Complete Streets with Two-Way Traffic at West and Harper Avenues

Downtown's current mixture of one- and two-way streets creates confusion for visitors and residents. In fact, traffic flow was mentioned by most residents in community meetings and the survey as being a point of frustration. Implementing Complete Streets, which support safe

pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle travel, with two-way traffic on West Avenue and Harper Avenue will help to reduce confusion on these routes. By designing new traffic patterns with Complete Streets design guidelines, pedestrians and cyclists will be more safely included in Downtown travel.

Paved Crosswalks at Major Pedestrian Intersections

Implementing paved crosswalks at major pedestrian intersections, like those that already exist at Main Street and Harper Avenue, will better signal pedestrian crossings for vehicles. These crosswalks are also more visible to pedestrians, particularly those new to the area or with low vision.

Downtown Core Pedestrian Zone

Through vehicular traffic could be closed during special events and programming within the Downtown core to make the area between H Lewis Street, Boundary Street, Ashe Avenue and Harper Avenues pedestrian only. Emergency and service vehicles can be allowed within these streets during such events. Surface parking is available within walking distances of these boundary streets to assist in the establishment of such a pedestrian zone.

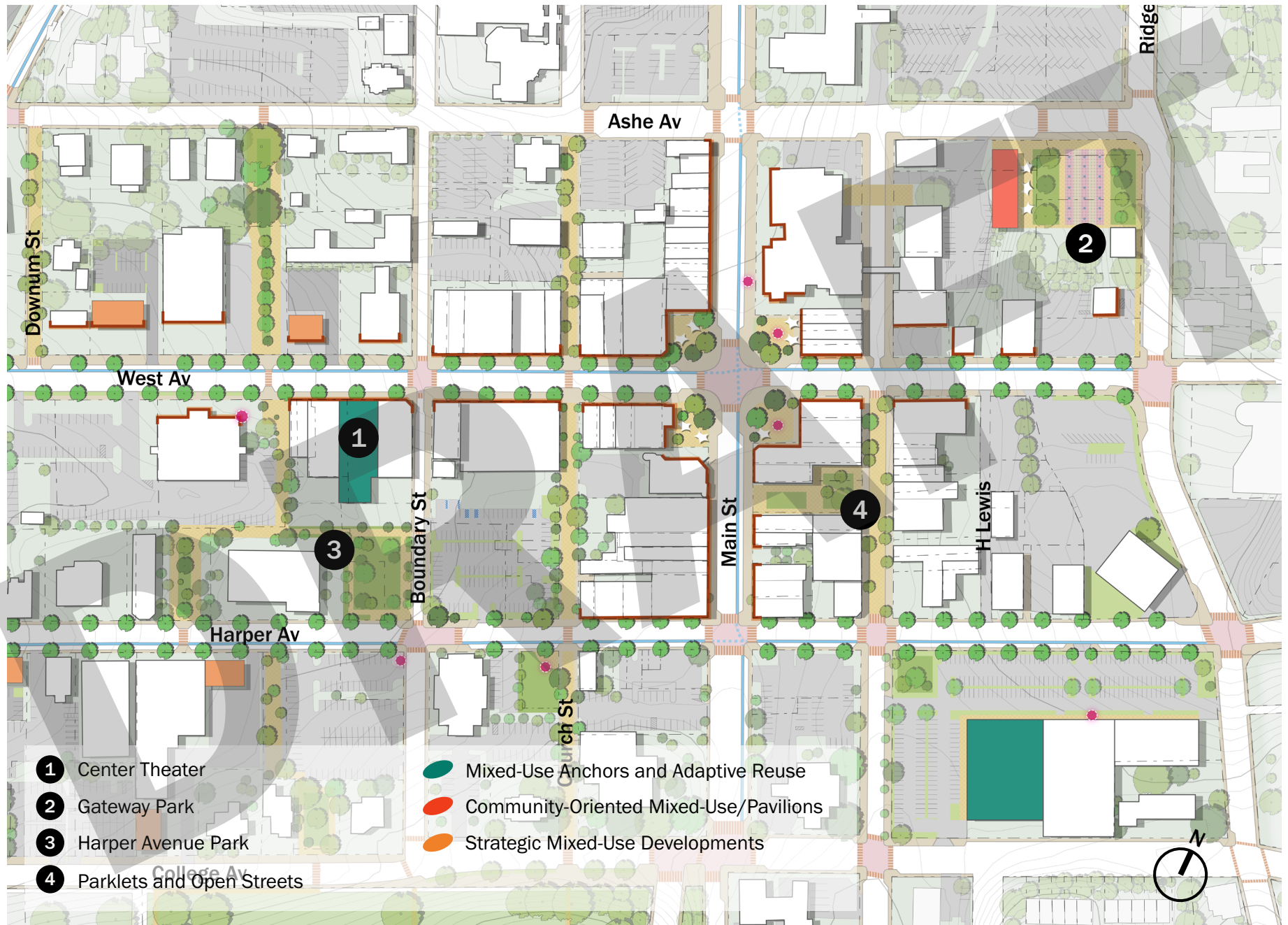
Neighborhood Gateway Improvements

Gateways to Downtown, including Harper Avenue and Ridge Street entering Downtown from U.S. 321, can be redesigned to encourage vehicle flow into Downtown instead of diverting to other neighborhoods. By more clearly signaling entrances to Downtown through development, signage, streetscapes, and other urban design features, newcomers to Downtown can more clearly find their way into the Downtown core.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm New Gateway Park

Both in the survey and throughout community meetings, Lenoir residents emphasized the need for more green, open, or leisure space Downtown. Redesigning the gully located at the corner of Ridge Street and Ashe Street could create safe, accessible green space near the Downtown core, create additional green connections to J.E. Broyhill Park up the street, and better design the gully to capture and deal with rain-water and groundwater flows more efficiently and beautifully.

Downtown District, Illustrative Site Plan



Converting the parking lot at Boundary Street and Harper Avenue will create additional green space near the Downtown core. This space can complement major events and festivals, which use the neighboring parking lot as their headquarters and starting points, and provide a green space for smaller events, pop-ups, and outdoor happenings.

These park spaces will complement new North-South Greenways, which link larger assets just outside Downtown like Walker Stadium and J.E. Broyhill Park with commercial activity and residences in the Downtown core. The greenways will provide shaded, accessible corridors for people to pass through blocks and invite nearby businesses to expand into protected, walkable areas during warmer months.

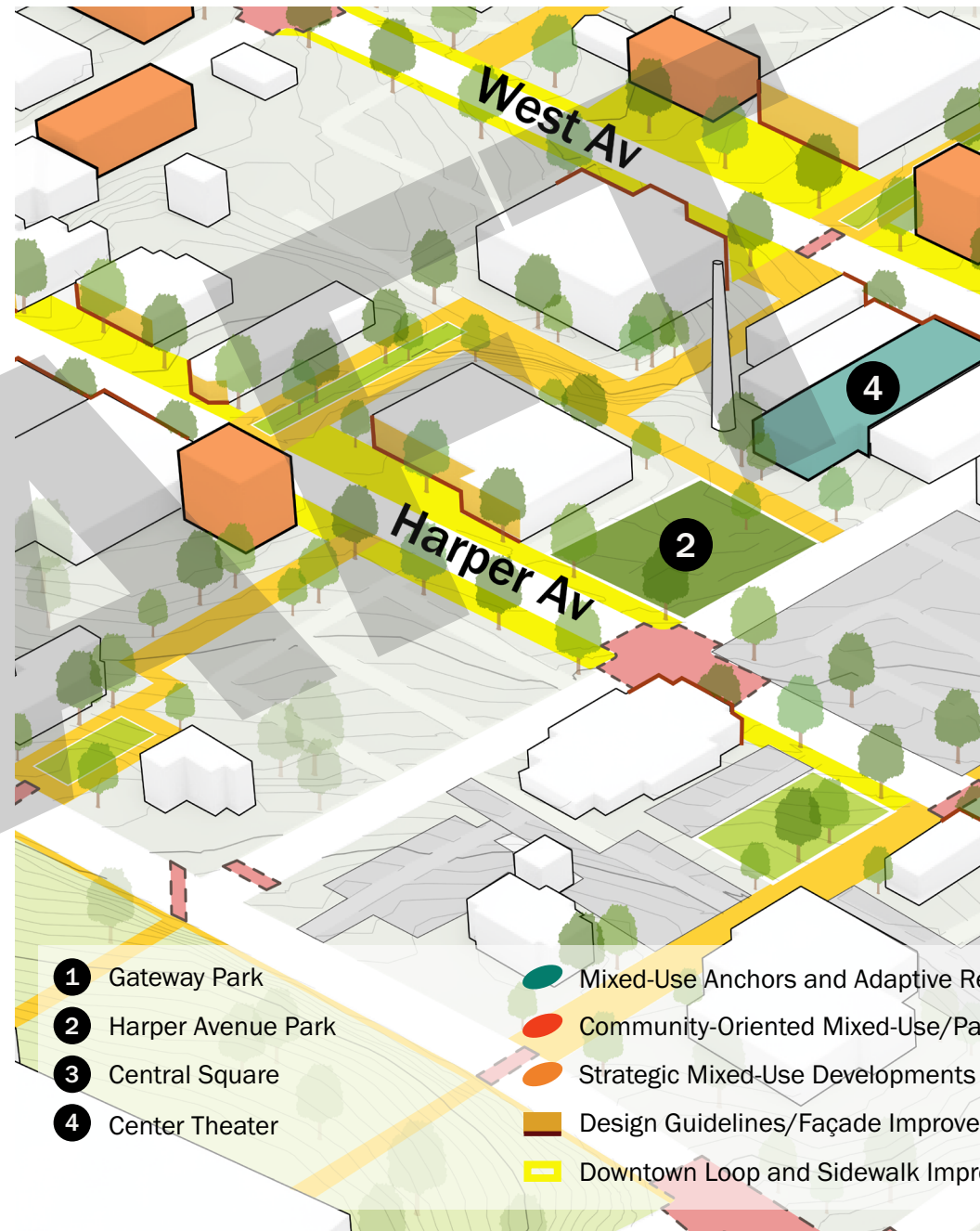
Policy and Capacity

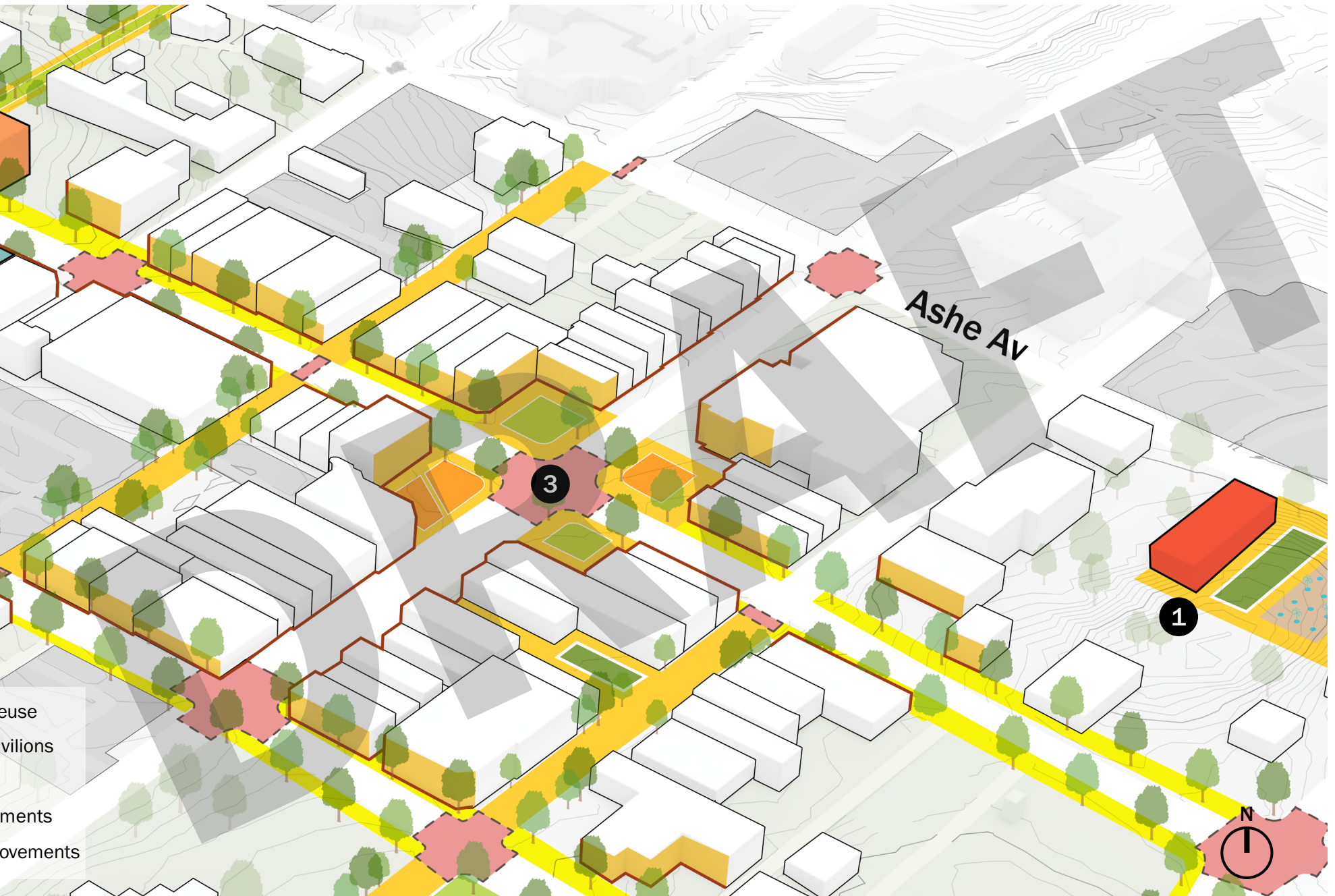
To take on the work of implementing recommendations, DLMSt should increase its capacity by hiring more specialists. The Plan's recommendations will require additional funding, RFPs, and plans — all in addition to the current work of managing and organizing events and festivals, supporting Downtown economic development, and other existing responsibilities.

Revising the existing vacant building ordinance would help reduce the number of vacant properties, diminish the amount of time properties remain vacant, and prevent vacancies in the future. Long-term vacancies can lead to demolition; in historic districts like the Downtown, preventing demolition will retain the character and history of the built environment.

The addition of multi-family, mixed-income residential developments as infill will invite new residents in to Downtown. With more residents, small businesses Downtown will experience more foot traffic and spending. Residents in other areas of Lenoir or the region will be able to downsize to live Downtown in a more walkable, bikeable, and rollable neighborhood and reduce the need of personal vehicles for every trip.

Downtown District, Illustrative Aerial View





reuse
villions
ments
movements



Pinecrest Orange, OH.



Walker Stadium. (n.d.). Downtown Lenoir.

MULBERRY STREET (SOUTH) DISTRICT

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

Walker Stadium Programming

Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute shares Walker Stadium with the Davenport Elementary School located within the Mulberry Street District within walking distance of Central Square and the Downtown District. The Plan recommends additional pedestrian connections to the Stadium like greenways, as well as the creation of a pedestrian promenade south of the elementary school. Additional pedestrian trails should be considered connecting Vaiden Street with the Main Street and Mulberry Street with the Stadium.

Multi-Modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

New paths can connect Walker Stadium to Downtown via walkable or bikeable routes. Working with the terrain, the terraced paths could provide universal access to the Stadium, Downtown amenities, and Mulberry Street and College Avenue.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

North-South Greenways connecting Walker Stadium to Downtown and beyond will allow more visitors to travel between locations. Fans from games at Walker Stadium will be more easily able to visit Downtown before or after games, and Downtown residents can better access the Stadium, Davenport Elementary, and other amenities in the South District.

Policy and Capacity

Existing zoning overlays and districts clearly define the Downtown, but do not encourage seamless, gradually increasing transitions between areas north and south of College Avenue. The city should consider adding a zoning overlay to encourage private investment including incentives for density and streetscape and other pedestrian friendly improvements.

Mulberry Street (South) District, Illustrative Site Plan



CASE STUDY SPOTLIGHTS

Carmel, IN Arts and Design District

Established in 2000, the District provides a distinction to a concentration of cultural assets and design-focused businesses/industries. The District is shared with townhouses, condominiums, retails, storefronts, and professional office suites.



Savannah, GA Historic District

Streets in the historic district were converted from one-way to two-way traffic flows, prioritizing connectivity over speed. This resulted in mobility tools and human-friendly infrastructure that celebrates the best aspects of Savannah's culture and history.



Savannah, GA Ellis Square

A former parking garage site was converted to a public square, Ellis Park, with an interactive splash park. The conversion increased accessibility to the Historic District for residents and tourists, enhancing synergies between open space and downtown businesses.



Hickory, NC Downtown District

The Downtown District is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advance commerce, recreation, and culture in downtown Hickory. The Bond Implementation Commission approved for renovating Union Square. The Downtown Social District expanded in 2022.



Warrenton, NC Bragging Rooster Beer and Mead

Main Streets Solutions Funds were used to develop a brewery/meadery in a one-story vacant building in downtown Warrenton in late 2021. The new business has since spurred the development of a tiny home village, co-working space, and ice cream shop nearby.



Bronx, NY Estella Diggs Park

This park was designed to create a public space on a vacant lot with steep and challenging terrain in an industrial neighborhood in the Bronx. Residents were missing a community-centered park that provide multiple types of gathering spaces for neighbors of all ages. The park includes gently winding accessible trails, benches for rest and conversation, and open areas and play structures for children.



Greenville, SC Swamp Rabbit Trail

Former railroad tracks near Greenville were developed into a 22 mile multiuse trail, opened in 2009. Today, 1 in 4 weekend visitors are not from greater Greenville. Local spending has increased, boosting tourism in Greenville and in nearby Travelers Rest. Increased interest in the area because of the trail has also led to the EPA fast-tracking a local Superfund redevelopment project.



Danville, VA River District Association

A 2023 Great American Main Street Award Winner, the River District Association has created a strong network of local businesses, leveraging \$52 million in public funding to attract \$310 million in private investment, 150 new businesses, and over 1,200 new residences since 2010.





6

PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION



PHASING AND PRIORITIES

Implementation of the Plan recommendations will need to be phased in alignment with the City's priorities. The following provides a phasing and prioritization framework for various actions, projects, and initiatives recommended in this plan document.

- Prioritize adaptive reuse of historic buildings while incorporating innovative solutions to reduce climate impacts.
- Review all projects currently funded and/or in the design/planning and implementation for consistency with the Downtown Plan recommendations.
- Pursue a methodical implementation process from vision to construction including due diligence, feasibility, budgeting, requests for funding and approval, planning, design, and construction.
- Embed placemaking, landscaping, and multi-modal circulation enhancements as part of each facility and/or major capital project.

Provided below are the phasing strategies for the Plan recommendations. The phasing strategy is divided into three distinct phases as short-term, medium-term, and the long-term. The short term or immediate term projects are recommended to catalyze public investment, help galvanize other private investment and funding. The phasing strategy also provides flexibility to prioritize projects based on changes due to funding and city's priorities.

Short Term (0-2 years)

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

- Begin capital campaign and outreach coordination for the Harper Band Building.
- The Campus and OVT Pavilion Design Phase I improvements:
 - Feasibility and concept studies for the Harper Band Building adaptive reuse and Masonry Building.
 - Demolish Masonry Building and the existing shed across Harper Avenue.

Multi-modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

- Begin phased implementation of pedestrian North-South Greenways.
- ADA improvements to access Mack Cook Stadium and The Campus area.
- Construction of monumental stairs to connect Harper Avenue with The Campus.
- Complete multiuse and/or bicycle lane connections from the core Downtown district to J.E. Broyhill Park.
- Improve connection to the OVT from The Campus and the core Downtown district.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

- Pilot projects for tactical urbanism particularly focused on adding more open space by temporarily converting surface lots into temporary public spaces in the core Downtown district.

Policy and Capacity

- Expand Main Street operations, including the Municipal Service District boundary.
- Consider vacant buildings and two-way street ordinances for adoption.
- Amend zoning for the Downtown Districts to add parking, design guidelines, and incentives for multi-family housing.

Medium Term (2-5 years)

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

- The Campus Phase II Improvements
 - Improvements to the Auditorium.
 - Adaptive reuse and renovation of the Harper Band Building
 - Landscape improvements to new plaza area behind the Gymnasium overlooking Mack Cook Stadium, including new stage/pavilion.
- Begin implementing Arts and Culture Trail.

Multi-modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

- Implement two-way streets (Complete Streets) in a phased manner starting with West and Harper Avenues and Main Street towards The Campus.
- Connect OVT with The Campus Area through additional cross walks, pedestrian bump outs in multiple locations.
- Implement EV parking stations near The Campus.
- Consider fundraising campaigns for public realm improvements including memorial walks.
- Continue Phased North-South Greenway Implementation
- Implement shared parking strategy including partnerships with the privately owned parking lots.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

- OVT Pavilion and Community Park
 - Design and construct a new OVT Pavilion and Community Park. The Community Park should be phased to expand towards West Avenue.
 - Renovate the existing LEOS facility and add an expanded surface parking lot.
- Gateway Park
 - Design and construct new Gateway Park.

Policy and Capacity

- Continue expanding DLMSt capacity to add more staff for overseeing programming and activities within the Downtown and The Campus.

Long Term (5-10 years)

Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

- Focus on strategic anchor redevelopment projects including renovation of the major vacant buildings such as the Center Theater and others in the Downtown.
- Continue to incentivize partnerships for mixed-use infill projects including mixed-income housing and adaptive reuse projects focused on mixed-income and affordable housing.

Multi-modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

- Continue phased implementation of the North-South Greenways.

Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

- Continue implementing public realm and landscaping improvements
- Implementing the two-way streets (Complete Streets) in a phased manner starting with West and Harper Avenues and Main Street towards The Campus.
- Consider a Downtown-wide art, cultural and historic trail connecting various Downtown attractions.
- Improve Central Square area and implement pocket parks programs along North-South Greenways.

Policy and Capacity

- Continue to monitor progress of various Downtown policies to encourage and incentivize private investment, placemaking and vibrant programming.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following table identifies public and private entities that could be responsible for the implementation of relevant Plan recommendations and actions. These actions should be coordinated across phasing, and responsible parties should be aligned with the goals and recommendations of this Plan.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS		PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING LEVEL
A. Short Term (0-2 years)			
1. Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming			
A1.1	The Campus Phase I Capital Campaign and Improvements		
	Begin capital campaign and outreach coordination for the Harper Band Building.	DLMSt	\$\$\$
	The Campus and OVT Pavilion Design Phase I improvements.	City of Lenoir	\$\$
	Feasibility and concept studies for the Harper Band Building adaptive reuse and Masonry Building.	City of Lenoir	\$
	Demolish Masonry Building and the existing shed across Harper Avenue.	City of Lenoir	\$
2. Multi-modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking			
A2.1	Begin phased implementation of pedestrian North-South Greenways.	Public Works with DLMSt	\$\$
A2.2	ADA improvements to access Mack Cook Stadium and Campus area.	City of Lenoir	\$
A2.3	Construction of monumental stairs to connect Harper Avenue with The Campus.	City of Lenoir	\$\$
A2.4	Complete multiuse and/or bicycle lane connections from the core Downtown district to J.E. Broyhill Park.	City of Lenoir	\$
A2.5	Improve connection to the OVT from The Campus and the core Downtown district.	City of Lenoir	\$
3. Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm			
A3.1	Pilot projects for tactical urbanism particularly focused on adding more open space by temporarily converting surface lots into temporary public spaces in the core Downtown district.	DLMSt with Parks and Recreation	\$

4. Policy and Capacity

A4.1	Expand Main Street operations including the Municipal Service District boundary.	City of Lenoir and DLMSt	\$\$
A4.2	Consider vacant buildings and two-way street ordinances for adoption.	City of Lenoir	\$
A4.3	Amend zoning for the Downtown Districts to add parking, design guidelines, and incentives for multi-family housing.	Planning	\$

B. Medium Term (2-5 years)

1. Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

B1.1	The Campus Phase II Improvements		
	Improvements to the Auditorium.	City of Lenoir with Partners	\$\$
	Adaptive reuse and renovation of the Harper Band Building.	City of Lenoir with Partners	\$\$\$
	Landscape improvements to plaza including new pavilion.	City of Lenoir	\$\$
B1.2	Begin implementing Arts and Culture Trail.	DLMSt	\$\$

2. Multi-modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

B2.1	Implement two-way streets (Complete Streets) in a phased manner starting with West and Harper Avenues and Main Street towards The Campus.	Public Works	\$\$
B2.2	Connect OVT with The Campus area through additional cross walks, pedestrian bump outs in multiple locations.	Parks and Recreation with Public Works	\$
B2.3	Implement EV parking stations near The Campus.	Public Works	\$
B2.4	Consider fundraising campaigns for public realm improvements including memorial walks.	Parks and Recreation with Partners	\$
B2.5	Continue phased North-South Greenway implementation.	Public Works	\$\$
B2.6	Implement shared parking strategy including partnerships with the privately owned parking lots.	Public Works	\$

3. Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

B3.1	OVT Pavilion and Community Park		
	Design and construct a new OVT Pavilion and Community Park. The Community Park should be phased to expand towards West Avenue.	Parks and Recreation	\$\$
	Renovate the existing LEOS facility and add an expanded surface parking lot.	City of Lenoir with Parks and Recreation	\$\$
B3.2	Gateway Park		
	Design and construct new Gateway Park.	Parks and Recreation	\$\$

4. Policy and Capacity

- B4.1 Continue expanding DLMSt capacity to add more staff for overseeing programming and activities within the Downtown and The Campus.

DLMSt

\$

C. Long Term (5-10 years)

1. Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

- C1.1 The Campus Phase III Improvements and Programming

Coordinated programming and activities of The Campus and surrounding area.

DLMSt

\$

- C1.2 Focus on strategic anchor redevelopment projects including renovation of the major vacant buildings such as the Center Theater and others in the Downtown.

City of Lenoir

\$\$\$

- C1.3 Continue to incentivize partnerships for mixed-use infill projects including mixed-income housing and adaptive reuse projects focused on mixed-income and affordable housing.

DLMSt

\$

2. Multi-modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

- C2.1 Continue phased implementation of the North-South Greenways.

Public Works

\$\$

3. Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

- C3.1 Continue implementing public realm and landscaping improvements.

Parks and Recreation

\$\$

- C3.2 Implementing the two-way streets (Complete Streets) in a phased manner starting with West and Harper Avenues and Main Street towards The Campus.

Public Works

\$\$

- C3.3 Consider Downtown-wide art, cultural and historic trail connecting various Downtown attractions.

DLMSt

\$\$

- C3.4 Improve Central Square Area and implement pocket parks programs along North-South Greenways.

Parks and Recreation

\$\$

4. Policy and Capacity

- C4.1 Continue to monitor progress of various Downtown policies to encourage and incentivize private investment, placemaking and vibrant programming.

DLMSt

\$

FUNDING STRATEGIES

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mixed-Use, Arts, Culture, and Heritage Programming

The Campus Phase I Capital Campaign and Improvements

Private Philanthropy

State and Federal Historic Tax Credits

Grants: National Trust Preservation Funds, North Carolina Preservation Consortium Preservation Grants, Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation, National Endowment for the Arts Out Town Grant; Grants: NC Department of Commerce Rural Grant Programs, including the Rural Building Reuse and Economic Infrastructure Grants

City of Lenoir: General Fund, Capital Project Fund; Occupancy Tax

2. Multi-modal Circulation, Connectivity, and Parking

Grants: PeopleForBikes Industry Community Grant Program; USDOT RAISE Grant Program; USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program; NCDOT Multimodal Planning Grant, Paved Trails and Sidewalk Feasibility Studies Grant; NCDOT/NC Department of Commerce Economic Development Grant

City of Lenoir: General Fund, Capital Project Fund

3. Placemaking, Open Space, and the Public Realm

Public-private partnerships (P3): Pilot tactical urbanism projects

Grants: National Endowment for the Arts Out Town Grant; Project for Public Spaces Community Placemaking Grants; ArtPlace America; NC Department of Environmental Quality Stormwater Funding Program (LASII) for green infrastructure

City of Lenoir: General Fund, Capital Project Fund; Occupancy Tax; Municipal Service District

4. Policy and Capacity

Percent for Art Policy

Grants: NC Community College Industrial Training Programs; NC Department of Commerce On-the-Job (OTJ) Programs

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We would also like to thank:

City of Lenoir Committee of the Whole

Joseph Gibbons, Mayor
David Stevens, Mayor Pro Tem
Jonathan Beal, Council Member
Todd Perdue, Council Member
James 'Ike' Perkins, Council Member
Ralph Prestwood, Council Member
Kimmie Rogers, Council Member
Crissy Thomas, Council Member

Scott Hildebran, City Manager
Matthew Anthony, Community Engagement Coordinator
Donna Bean, Finance Director
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Norman Staines, Fire Chief
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Patrick Longano, Foothills Performing Arts
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Dontrell Parson, Appalachian State University
Jamie Parson, Appalachian State University
Rebecca Phillips, MoonJoy Meadery
Jesse Plaster, Architect
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Carmela Tomlinson, Caldwell Community College and
Technical Institute Small Business Center
Mark Transou, First Citizens Bank
Matthew Underwood, Mystery Hill
Gonzalo Vazquez, Aary's Ice Cream/Mi Molcajete
Caron Baker Wike, Wishful Thinking Studio
Hannah Williams, City of Lenoir
Glenda Wilson, Realty Executives

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 Jonathan Beal, City of Lenoir
 Iris Bender, Taste of Havana
 Sherri Biederman, Brews and Mews
 Jamie Brubaker, Liquid Roots
 Tommy Brubaker, Liquid Roots
 Katie Brummet, Liquid Roots
 Taylor Brummet, Liquid Roots
 Rev. Susan Buchanan, St. James Episcopal Church
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 Bryan Moore, Caldwell Chamber of Commerce
 Shane Norris, Lenoir Presbyterian Church
 Rick Pierce, North Carolina Youth Soccer Association
 Mark Poarch, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute
 Tyler Reese, Blue Ridge Energy
 James Robertson, City of Lenoir Recreation Advisory Board
 Timothy Rohr, City of Lenoir
 Jennifer Sime, DoodleBugs
 Steven Stewart, Stewart and Associates Insurance
 Markie Townsend, City of Lenoir
 Sandra Williams, LifeStore Bank and Insurance
 Ben Willis, Western Piedmont Council of Governments

And lastly...

To the attendees and volunteers of every community event and each survey respondent— your input and contributions to the Plan were invaluable. The planning team is deeply appreciative of your time and involvement.





8

APPENDICES

DRAFT

RELEVANT CASE STUDIES

Percent for Art Programs

Percent for art policies generally apply to any municipal capital improvement project where a determined percentage of the total project budget is set aside for public art. These policies also address how the money is to be spent on the acquisition and commissioning of public artworks. While most Percent for Art policies are public, Americans for the Arts provides some examples on their website.

Wake Forest, NC: Percent for Art Program

The Town of Wake Forest has a robust public art program that is overseen by an 11-member Public Art Commission. The Town's Percent for Art Program was established by ordinance in 2010. It allocates 1% of selected capital improvement projects for the creation and maintenance of works of public art. The complete ordinance language, as well as additional provisions related to public art maintenance and conservation, can be found online.

Greenways and Open Space

New York, NY: Hudson River Park

A buffer between dense mixed-use and the Hudson River, this linear park offers opportunities for active and passive recreation along Manhattan's western edge. The park has programmable events spaces, public art and sculpture installations, and picnic, lounging, and seating areas along the paved route.

New Orleans, LA: Lafitte Greenway

A 2.6-mile linear park that runs through the heart of New Orleans, connecting neighborhoods and offering pedestrian and bike paths, public spaces, and green infrastructure. Opened in 2015, the Greenway has served as the city's premier bicycle and pedestrian pathway, linking neighborhoods from the French Quarter to City Park.

Greenville, SC: Swamp Rabbit Trail

A 22-mile-long multiuse greenway that connects downtown Greenville with neighboring communities. Converted from an abandoned rail

corridor, this trail has become a popular recreational asset, attracting residents and tourists alike. Greenville's success in developing the trail involved collaborative efforts between local government, private donors, and community organizations.

Greenville's 2006 Trails and Greenways Master Plan and later Bicycle Plan recognize the importance of connecting residents and visitors alike to popular destinations throughout the city. The master plan encourages physical activity, promotes safe and sustainable transportation, stimulates economic growth and helps to protect environmental quality of open spaces and creek and river corridors. Similar projects have helped improve public health, boost local economies, and promote sustainable tourism while preserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Memphis, TN: Wolf River Greenway

The Wolf River Greenway is a paved multiuse trail that winds through wetlands, forests, protected city parks, and residential and commercial areas, connecting downtown Memphis with other neighborhoods in Memphis and as far away as the cities of Germantown and Collierville. Over 180,000 people used the trail in the first two years, garnering \$14 million in economic and other benefits.

Pedestrian Alleys

Roslindale, MA: Birch Street Tactical Plaza

Roslindale Village Main Street worked with the City of Boston, business owners, and community partners to pedestrianize a one-way street fronted by 11 businesses. Over a series of one-day and one-week pop-ups, RVMS built community and civic support while designing a permanent space, custom furniture and installations, and a branded identity.

Pocket Parks

Asheville, NC: Pack Square Park

Spearheaded by Pack Square Conservancy, a non-profit organization established in 2000 to design and build the 6.5-acre park and to raise the necessary funds. The elimination of several streets allowed these areas to be more closely linked. The park has a large open green space on a slope overlooking a stage, three water features including a splash fountain and original art by regional artists. There are many seating

areas surrounded by native trees and shrubs.

Austin, TX: 2nd Street District Pocket Parks

In Austin's 2nd Street District, several pocket parks have been developed to provide open space in a dense urban setting. These small parks feature seating areas, greenery, and public art, offering respite to shoppers and pedestrians in the bustling downtown area.

Boston, MA: Parklets Program

Through a partnership with A Better City, the City of Boston started a program for community partners to sponsor parklets in their neighborhoods for \$340/month. The permit-regulated parklets can provide seating, greenery, shade, art, and other features from April through November.

Policy Recommendations

- Micro-grant programs - support community-led pocket park initiatives. Small grants to local groups or individuals interested in developing and maintaining pocket parks in their neighborhoods.
- Streamlined Permitting Process
- Public Funding and Budget Allocations
- Incentives for Developers and Property Owners - financial incentives, such as tax breaks or grants for property owners who dedicate their land for pocket parks. Incentives can help offset development costs and encourage private participation in creating public open spaces.

Traffic Calming Complete Streets

Complete Streets is a street design policy and methodology that centers pedestrians and cyclists to encourage more walkable, bikeable, rollable spaces that can support more than parking and car traffic. Multiple cities have implemented Complete Streets plans and completed street redesign projects. Smart Growth America recognized Rogersville, MO, Tuscon, AZ, and Wellington, FL among the top 10 strongest policies passed between 2019 and 2022, which can be viewed online.

NACTO

NACTO, a national transportation advocacy organization, advises that

cities should utilize speed control mechanisms that influence behavior, lower speeds, which in turn reduce injuries and fatalities.

- Design streets using target speed (the speed you intend for drivers to go) rather than operating speed.
- Use short cycle lengths and/or slow signal progressions in downtown areas and networks with closely spaced signals.
- Speed enforcement cameras have proven highly effective at reducing speeds and increasing compliance.

NACTO Speed Reduction Mechanisms

- Medians - create a pinch point for traffic and can reduce pedestrian crossing distances.
- Pinch point - restrict motorists from operating at high speeds on local streets and significantly expand the sidewalk realm for pedestrians.
- Chicanes - slow drivers by alternating parking or curb extensions along the corridor
- Lane Shift - horizontally deflects a vehicle and may be designed with striping, curb extensions, or parking.
- Speed Humps - vertically deflect vehicles and may be combined with a mid-block crosswalk.
- 2-Way Streets - encourage motorists to be more cautious and wary of oncoming traffic.
- Roundabouts - reduce traffic speeds at intersections by requiring motorists to move with caution through conflict points.
- Diverter - breaks up the street grid while maintaining permeability for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Street Trees - narrow a driver's visual field and create rhythm along the street.
- On-Street Parking - narrows the street and slows traffic by creating friction for moving vehicles.

Interim Design Strategies (From Pilot to Permanent)

These strategies are a set of tools and tactics that cities can use to improve their roadways and public spaces in the face of limited funding streams, complex approval and regulatory processes. Small scale, interim changes can deliver results more quickly while providing time to assess and evaluate potential impacts of a project. Interim designs often go on to become full-scale capital projects, some are altered or redesigned in the process (piloting designs at scale) based on how they

perform in real time. This produces a more effective final product while saving on future expenditure and improvements that need to be made in revision.

- Moving the Curb - convert on-street parking spaces or curbside travel lanes to bus lanes or cycle tracks.
 - 2-4 parking spaces can be replaced with a parklet or bike corral. Host food trucks or vendors on weekends
 - Interim Sidewalk Widening (planter beds, bollards)
 - Curb Extensions
 - Parklet
 - Bike Corral or Bike Sharing
- Interim Public Plazas - safer intersections, slow traffic speeds, activate public space, energize surrounding street.
 - No parking within the public plaza, ensure ADA-compliance.
 - Design with a strong edge and defined with striping and bollards.
- Heavy planters, granite blocks, movable seating

Boston, MA: Tactical Public Realm Guidelines

The guidelines lay out intentions and strategies for calming street traffic and making pedestrian or human-scale spaces. Stemming from city mobility and Complete Plans, the guidelines focus on tactical plazas, parklets, outdoor cafes, and street murals and other temporary art.

Tactical plazas are used to close redundant streets, square corners, or use extra traffic lanes to create pedestrian spaces. Painted curb extensions or other street artwork can calm turning traffic and make pedestrian crossings more visible. The guidelines also include design guidelines and permitting strategies for public and private stewardship.

Incentivize Residential in Downtown

Form based codes, cash incentives, matching funds, grant programs, zoning changes, and any combination can be employed to incentivize residential uses Downtown. Incentivizing residential uses can allow more people to stay and enjoy Downtown, promoting a more vibrant, lived-in neighborhood.

The current zoning is long, with additional requirements buried in multiple sections. However, recent amendments follow current best practices and reflect a hybrid code (not as prescriptive as many form-based codes,

but more design-oriented than traditional zoning codes): It does allow for 0 ft minimum setbacks in B3, up to 80 ft building height, minimum 25 ft street frontage, ADUs, and off-street parking is not required.

Amendments to the zoning code could look like emphasizing walkability, promoting infill development, and promoting second and third floor residential uses. Consider allowing shared parking, where residents can rent municipal parking spaces for overnight use. Consider removing single-family dwelling options and add neighborhood business retailing and streetery/on-street restaurant permissions.

Longer-term, the City should evaluate other strategies, like deed restrictions or easements, to safeguard affordability. The City should also explore tax credits for residential development, and connect developers with such financing.

Ukiah, CA: Proactive Housing Funding

Ukiah's municipal housing division seeks out traditional and nontraditional funding sources, including rehabilitation and first-time homebuyer housing credits. They utilize HOME funding, make connections with social service organizations to gain funding for potential developers, expedite permit and application processes, have a streamlined, clear checklist for developers, reach out to developers to connect them with available properties, and purchase and loan properties to developers. The City also has a housing trust fund, which is funded with \$500,000 for housing development for lower income and disabled residents. The City also removes siting requirements for group homes, transitional housing, and shelters. It also seeks to develop 'at-risk' units, which are multifamily rental housing that receives government assistance and is eligible to convert to market rate housing within 10 years,

Modesto, CA: Incentives to Prevent Vacancy

Modesto offers occupancy incentives for new businesses as cash, re-funds for some of the first few years of new business, or expanded hours of operation for existing businesses. The City also offers new development incentives, which are exemptions for roadway and construction permits in addition to occupancy incentives. Finally, Modesto offers physical improvement incentives, which are matching grants for maintenance and beautification, up to \$10,000.

DOWNTOWN FESTIVALS AND EVENTS INVENTORY

Type Program

Digital	Elf on a Shelf in a Store in Lenoir
Digital	Leprechaun Chase
Festival	NC Blackberry Festival
Event	Starry Night Christmas Parade
Festival	Carolina Tattoo & Arts Gathering
Event	Wood, Fire, Smoke Festival
Event	NC Gravity Games
Event	Pumpkin Patch Parade
Event	Lenoir Downtown Cruisers: Cruise-In
Event	Lenoir Downtown Cruisers: Trunk or Treat
Event	Light Up Lenoir!
Other	Downtown Carriage Rides
Ride	Bootlegger 100 Cycle Race
Event	Lenoir Downtown Cruisers: Toy Drive
Event	Summer Music Madness
Event	Lenoir Legends Home Game*
Ride	Lenoir Bicycle Fest
Event	Summer Movie Madness

*Located adjacent to the Downtown CBD.

# of Occurrences	Month												Organizer		Event Length		Ticketing		Time				
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Downtown Lenoir	City of Lenoir Parks & Recreation	Community Partner	One Day	Multi-Day	Unticketed		Ticketed - Free	Ticketed - Charge	Registration - Free	Registration - Charge
1																							Virtual
1																							Virtual
2																							12:00pm (Day 1)-9:30pm (Day 2)
1																							3:30pm-8pm
1																							3pm-10pm (Day 1), 12pm-10pm (Day 2), 12pm-7pm (Day 3)
1																							10am-7pm
1																							7:30am-3pm
1																							3pm-6pm
6																							3pm-9pm
1																							3pm-9pm
1																							5pm-7:30pm
6																							5pm-8pm
1																							5:30am-9pm
1																							12:30pm-6pm
4																							7pm-10pm
21																							7pm-10pm
1																							10am-2pm
3																							7pm-10pm
0	0	0	1	3	2	5	5	1	2	3	2	4	8	3	7	13	4	10	0	3	3	1	

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**LENOIR CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024
6:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Joe Gibbons presiding. Councilmembers present were Jonathan Beal, Ike Perkins, Todd Perdue, Ralph Prestwood, Kimmie Rogers, Mayor Pro-Tem David Stevens, Crissy Thomas, City Manager Scott Hildebran, City Clerk Shirley Cannon and City Attorney Timothy Rohr.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. The meeting was opened by a moment of silence and the pledge of allegiance as led by Mayor Gibbons.

**WARMING
SHELTERS:**

- B. On behalf of City Council, Mayor Gibbons shared the faith based community and churches will be discussing providing warming shelters for people in the community that may need it during this extremely cold weather. He asked everyone to pray for those who need these services and thanked everyone for all of their assistance. Mayor Gibbons said Council just wants everyone to be safe in this weather.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION;
FIREHOUSE SUBS GRANT:**

- C. Fire Chief Norman Staines reported in 2005, the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Board of Directors established the 501c(3), non-profit Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation. This Foundation awards grants four times per year and the City of Lenoir Fire Department applied and was awarded a grant up to \$26,698.62 to purchase a variety of hoses and nozzles. The Fire House Public Safety Foundation will initiate the purchasing process no later than Friday, February 9, 2024.

The requested equipment will be 18 fire nozzles and 72 sections of 1¾ inches of fire hose that will standardize all initial attack hose and nozzle combinations on all City fire trucks. These nozzles will have an increased gallons per minute flow over many of our current nozzles, which in turn, will increase their fire suppression. Chief Staines pointed out a quicker fire extinguishment will allow firefighters to spend less time in these dangerous environments plus offer firefighters additional protection. Chief Staines stated they are currently awaiting notification when the new equipment will arrive and mentioned the vendor will pay for the cost of shipping the equipment.

On behalf of the Fire Department, Chief Staines thanked City Council, City Manager Scott Hildebran and Finance Director Donna Bean for all of their assistance and support throughout the grant process.

II. MATTERS SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

III. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Minutes: Approval of the minutes of the City Council Meeting of Tuesday, January 2, 2024 as submitted.
- B. Engineering Services Contract, McGill Associates: Staff recommends City Council approval to enter into a contract for engineering services with McGill Associates for the Lenoir-Valdese Waterline Interconnection Project as submitted. (A copy of the Engineering Services Contract is included in these minutes by reference. Refer to pages.)
- C. Capital Project Budget Ordinance, Wayfinding Signs: Staff request City Council to adopt the Capital Project Budget Ordinance for the Wayfinding Signs Capital Project in the amount of \$591,500.00 as submitted. (A copy of the Capital Project Budget Ordinance is hereby included in these minutes as by reference. Refer to page.)
- D. Resolution; Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant: Staff recommends City Council adopt the submitted Resolution Accepting the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant in the amount of \$26,698.62 as submitted. (A copy of the resolution is hereby included in these minutes by reference. Refer to page.)

Councilmember Ike Perkins asked for clarification regarding item C. Capital Project Budget Ordinance for wayfinding signage. City Manager Hildebran stated the City awarded the low bid to Rite Lite Signs for the project at the January 2 Council meeting and noted the City has available funding sources. The Capital Project Budget Ordinance is to create a fund in order to expend the funding amount.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Perkins, Council voted 7 to 0 to adopt items (A through D) on the Consent Agenda as described above and as recommended by City Staff.

IV. REQUESTS AND PETITIONS OF CITIZENS

COMMENTS; HOMELESS

ISSUE:

- A. Reverend James Wilfong, 1555 Miller Hill Road, Lenoir, NC and Pastor of Highway to Hedges Church, addressed City Council on behalf of the homeless population. Reverend Wilfong read scripture from the book of Matthew Chapter 25, verses 34 – 40 and said he believes that everyone can do better to help this situation. He stated he reached out to other churches about opening their doors to the homeless and has spoken with several members of City Council. Reverend Wilfong shared he will be driving several of the homeless people to Crossroads Community Church located on the Connolly Springs Road after the meeting as the church has agreed to open their facility to provide shelter. These individuals will be provided shelter from 7:00 p.m. each day until 7:00 a.m. the following morning.

Reverend Wilfong shared some of his background regarding being homeless twenty-seven years ago and pointed out everyone has been good to him over the years. Reverend Wilfong emphasized something needs to be done immediately to help these people as they do not have anything or anywhere to go. Reverend Wilfong finished his remarks by saying do the best you can until you know better, then do better.

Ken Carswell, Jr. addressed Council and commented his homeless situation was probably his fault. Mr. Carswell shared he was offered a job and would be starting on January 19. Mr. Carswell said he wants to see the homeless have a place where they can go, take a shower and have a meal. He stated the Soup Kitchen is currently providing meals for them and thanked City Council for allowing him to speak.

Ben Willis, Community & Economic Development Director, Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG), referred to the passion that Reverend Wilfong and the individuals present have for the homeless and noted it is a challenging and tough situation. He referred to the handout he distributed to Council and explained how the City of Lenoir, non-profit organizations, businesses and other groups previously met together and discussed creating a Homeless Response Team made up of individuals that have a variety of experience along with a new position for a Navigator who would be responsible for compiling pertinent information provided by homeless individuals throughout the four county area. In addition, these individuals would be given information about where to go for mental health services, temporary housing along with assistance regarding how to get a job. Mr. Willis stated these are federal programs and the process is hard to navigate. He referred to how these individuals need to obtain identification cards and other supporting documents.

Mr. Willis further explained this program is fairly new and noted the population is over 360,000 in the four county area. He shared their goal is to look at a long term approach and stated it is a seven year plan. In addition, Mr. Willis pointed out the available funding the federal government previously provided municipalities covers the four-county area and is only a drop in the bucket as to what is actually needed.

Councilmember David Stevens commented this process is the most efficient way to utilize these funds.

Councilmember Ike Perkins said the faith based community can join in and offered his church's van and kitchen to be used as needed. He stated he agrees and is on board with Reverend Wilfong that something needs to be done about this situation.

Mr. Willis thanked City Council and reiterated the faith based community will play an integral part with this situation.

On behalf of City Council, Mayor Gibbons stated the City wants to see things done to help this issue and will do what it can. Mayor Gibbons thanked all of them for what they are doing for the homeless population and stated we want everyone to have a chance and get involved.

V. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

VI. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CITY MANAGER

A. Items of Information

PLANNING BOARD:

1. The Planning Board will hold a work session on Monday, January 22 at 5:30 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:

2. The Committee of the Whole will meet on Tuesday, January 23 at 8:30 a.m. at the Police Department Training Room.

FOOTHILLS REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY:

3. The Foothills Regional Airport Authority will meet on Wednesday, January 31 at noon at the Airport facility.

THANK YOU; MLK

STAFF: 4. City Manager Hildebran thanked Lester Whittington and his Staff for all of their hard work during all of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events.

Mayor Gibbons also commended Sam Sturgis for being the recipient of the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. award. Mayor Gibbons stated Mr. Sturgis is a fine man and a great leader in the community.

Councilmember Thomas further thanked Chief Phelps along with staff of the Police Department for their assistance in providing transportation during the march from the MLK Center to J.E. Broyhill Park on Monday, January 15. Ms. Thomas stated the officer was appreciative of the celebration and honored to be a part of it. She remarked the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday is for all people and remarked we are a team that always shows up and supports each other.

B. Items for Council Action

VII. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CITY ATTORNEY**VIII. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MAYOR**

**BOARD APPOINTMENT; WESTERN
PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TAC COMMITTEE:**

- A. On behalf of a recommendation by Mayor Gibbons, and upon a motion by Councilmember Perdue, City Council voted 7 to 0 to appoint Councilmember Ike Perkins to serve a term on the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG)'s Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) as recommended by Mayor Gibbons.

IX. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILMEMBERS

**CLOSED
SESSION:**

- A. Pursuant to N.C.G.S.§143-318.11.5, and upon a motion from Mayor Pro-Tem Stevens which unanimously carried, City Council entered into closed session to discuss the acquisition of property.

**OPEN
SESSION:**

- B. Upon a motion by Councilmember Thomas, City Council voted unanimously to re-enter into open session.

X. ADJOURNMENT

- A. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Shirley M. Cannon, City Clerk

Joseph L. Gibbons, Mayor

CITY OF LENOIR
COUNCIL ACTION FORM

I. Agenda Item:

Project Bid Award: Old Lenoir High School Roof Replacement Project

II. Background Information:

Due to the current condition of the roof systems on the Gymnasium/Utility Room and Band Building/Workshop facility at the Lenoir High School Campus, staff feels that utilizing current CDBG funds to replace theses roof systems is the next best step in the improvement plan at the Lenoir High School Campus.

This Project was let and advertised for Public Bid on Friday January 19th with a public bid opening date of Friday January 26th at 2:00pm.

Bids:	Barger-Ashe Roofing	\$233,375.00
	Tecta America Carolinas LLC	\$620,305.00
	Trivette's Roofing and Guttering, LLC	\$114,980.00
	<i>(This bid was considered non- responsive and non-compliant)</i>	

III. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends awarding the bid to Barger–Ashe Roofing Company as the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder.

IV. Reviewed By:

City Attorney:

Public Works/Public Utilities Director: JH

City Manager:

**CITY OF LENOIR
OLD LENOIR HIGH SCHOOL ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT
ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**

Sealed bids for the **Old Lenoir High School Roof Replacement Project** will be received by City of Lenoir at 2:00 p.m. January 26, 2024 at the City of Lenoir Public Works facility located at 510 Greer Circle SW, Lenoir, NC and then publicly opened and read aloud.

The project consist of total replacement of two (2) Old Lenoir High School facility roof systems. The Gymnasium/Utility Facility and Band Building/Workshop facility.

Bid packets may be accessed electronically on the City of Lenoir webpage at <http://www.cityoflenoir.com/bids> or by contacting Public Works Operations Manager Jon Hogan (828) 757-2183 or Risk Manager David Coffey (828) 757-2217.

This project is funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. All applicable state and federal regulations regarding construction contracts will apply. All work must be in compliance with City of Lenoir and Caldwell County Building Code as well as ADA standards. Attention is called to the fact that the federal determined prevailing (Davis-Bacon) wage rates must be paid on this project which will be included in the bid packet. **Contract will require contractor's compliance with all federal Davis Bacon Wage requirements.**

The successful bidder shall be required to furnish evidence of liability insurance of at least \$1,000,000 and bodily insurance of at least \$300,000. The Contractor must have Workman Compensation insurance on all employees. Each bidder must be appropriately licensed in the State of North Carolina.

The City of Lenoir reserves the right to reject any and all bids, and to waive any defects and formalities in such bids. The City reserves the right to award the contract to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder which the City considers to be the best and most advantageous bid for the City.

The City of Lenoir encourages small, minority, female, and local contractors to bid on this project. The City also promotes fair housing, is an equal opportunity employer, and encourages others to provide equal employment opportunities. Small and minority firms are encouraged to submit bids. The City encourages contractor to hire Section 3 (local residents) when hires are needed. Section 3 Businesses subject to the requirements of section 3 of the HUD Act of 1968, as amended, 12 U.S.C. 1701u (section 3) will be given preferences as regulated in HUD's 24 CFR part 135.

This information can be made available in Spanish or other languages upon request by contacting Jon Hogan at 828-757-2183, TDD 711.

Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma. Por favor estar en contacto con Jon Hogan at 828-757-2183, TDD 711.

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

City of Lenoir, North Carolina

Old Lenoir High School Roof Replacement Project - 2024

Description:

The project consists of the complete roof replacement of two of the Old Lenoir High School facilities. The Gymnasium (8,424sqft), connected utility facility (1,518sqft) and Band Building (655sqft) and connected workshop facility (1,900sqft) complete with any required demolition and disposal of existing material required to complete the replacement at this facility. There will be a \$30,000 allowance for any structural roofing repairs required on the Band Building/Workshop facility. Bidders shall refer to the attached aerial images showing the approximate extent of roof replacements at these facilities.

Bid Security Requirements:

The anticipated total dollar value of this contract is below the threshold that requires a bid security, therefore no bid bond, or other form of bid security, will be required (North Carolina General Statute 143-129).

Performance and Payment Bond Requirements:

The anticipated total dollar value of this contract is below the threshold that requires performance and payment securities, therefore no performance and payment bonds will be required.

****If the contract is awarded to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, and the total dollar value of the contract exceeds this threshold, performance and payment bonds in the amount of 100% of the contract value will be required for any contractor or subcontractor with contract values exceeding \$50,000.00 (North Carolina General Statute 44A-26).****

Taxes: Federal, State, County and City:

Bidders shall show all applicable taxes (Federal, State, County, and City) as separate items on invoices.

Progress Payments:

Progress payments for work completed and accepted by the City of Lenoir may be considered over the life of the total contract, however progress payments for ongoing work at individual facilities will not be allowed. Following completion of the roof replacement at each of the two (2) facilities, the contractor may submit an application for payment for the work at that facility. Following review by City staff, each progress

payment invoice will be processed and payment will be made by check within thirty (30) days.

Retainage

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute 143-134.1, retainage in the amount of 5% will be withheld from progress payments by the City of Lenoir to the contractor until the project reaches 50% completion of the total contract amount. After 50% completion has been achieved, no further retainage will be withheld if work is deemed satisfactory and accepted by the City of Lenoir.

Final Payment:

Final Payment, including any withheld retainage, will be made by check within thirty (30) days, after in the judgment of the City of Lenoir the contractor has completely delivered all items and/or performed all the services in accordance with requirements of the specifications.

Bid Forms:

Bids must be on standard forms furnished by the City of Lenoir.

Bid Due Date:

It is the intention of the City of Lenoir to receive bids by 2:00pm on Friday, January 26, 2024, and promptly review bids and make a recommendation for awarding the contract during the week of January 24th through January 31st. Contract will be awarded at the February 6th City Council meeting.

Right to Accept or Reject Bids:

The City of Lenoir reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids.

Right to Award Contract to Lowest Responsible Bidder or Bidders:

The City of Lenoir reserves the right to award the contract to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder, taking into consideration quality, performance, and the timely completion of all work contained in the contract scope.

Site Visits and Inspection Prior to Bid Submission:

The City of Lenoir encourages all bidders to visit each facility and perform thorough site investigations prior to submission of bids. To schedule site visits, bidders

must contact the Building Maintenance Superintendent, Duke Moore, at (828) 757-2169, (828) 750-0229, or dmoore@ci.lenoir.nc.us.

Material Specifications:

Roof replacement bids are to include use of 60 mil membrane at this facility. Bid packages shall include a manufacturer's sample of the material to be supplied. Bids shall also specify all warranties on labor and material provided by the contractor and/or material manufacturer. Incidental material used during construction shall be new and of good quality.

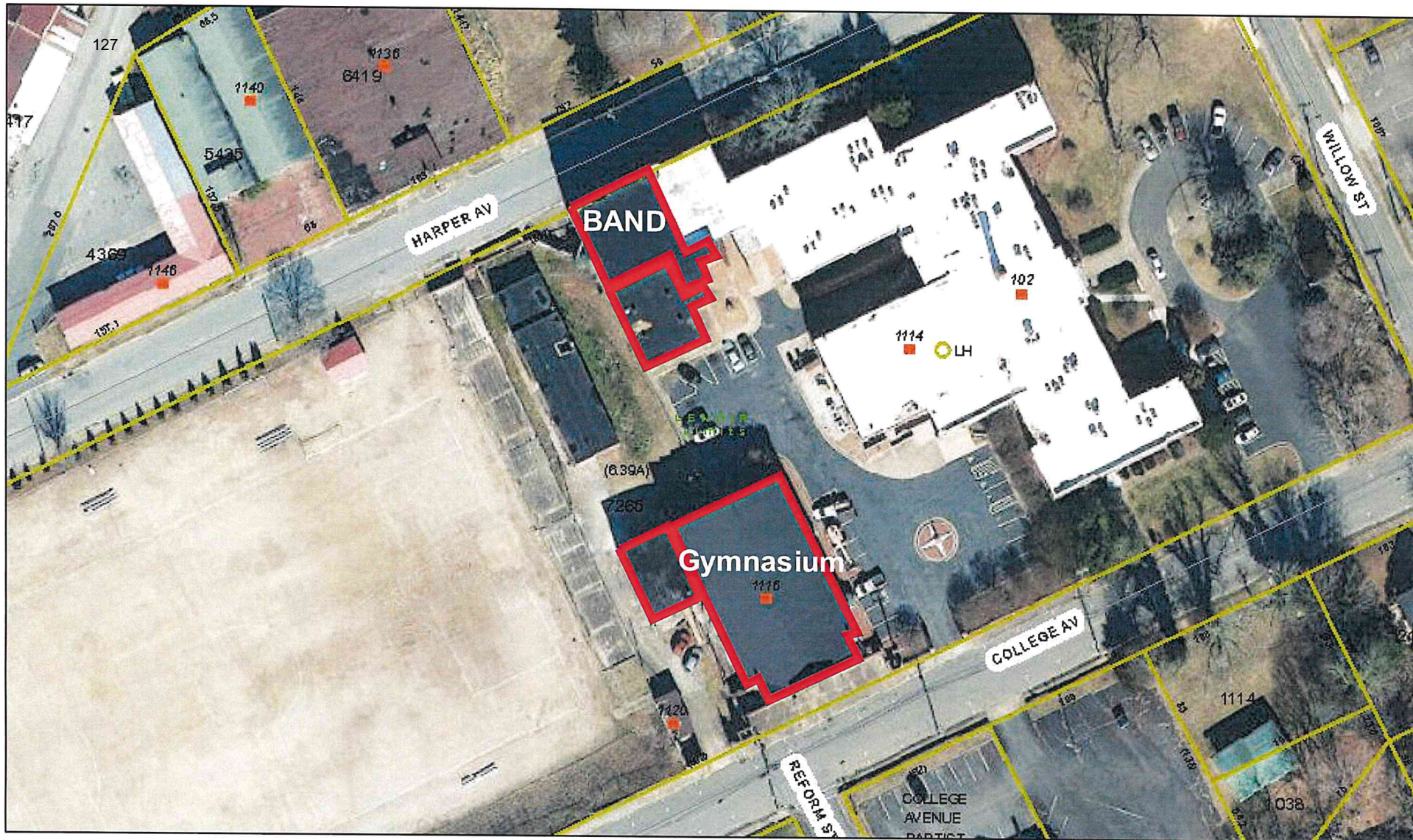
Time of Completion:

Bidders shall specify their anticipated project start and completion dates. This contract does not contain provisions for liquidated damages should the contractor fail to complete the work in a timely manner, however, construction schedule(s) will be required prior to work beginning at each facility.

Additional Work:

The successful bidder may be asked to supply pricing for additional work related to completion of roof replacements at one or more facilities. Should pricing for additional work, beyond standard roof replacement, be requested after execution of the contract, a formal change order detailing project costs and completion times will be drafted and executed by all parties.

****For the purposes of securing bids for roof replacements at the two (2) named facilities, only that work which is required to replace the existing roof at each facility shall be included in the bid****



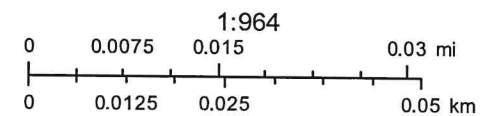
This map is NOT of land survey quality and is NOT suitable for such use.

Owner CITY OF LENOIR
PO BOX 958
LENOIR, NC 28645

Acct Number 50916
Parcel ID 06 13 2 7
NCPIN 2749667265

Deferred Val	\$0	
Assessed Val	\$1,232,400	
Calc Acreage	6.385704	
Land Units	868 (FF)	
Legal Desc	0797/0131 0082	0.00
Plat Ref	/	
Property Addr	102 WILLOW ST	

Caldwell County



January 16, 2024

City of Lenoir
Old Lenoir High School Roof Replacement Project - 2024
Contractor Bid Form (Revised)

Contractor Name: _____

Contractor Address: _____

 _____Contractor License Number: _____

Addendum No. 1 (initial): _____

Facility	Scope of Work	Bid
OLHS Gymnasium and Utiltliy Facility 1116 College Ave, SW Lenoir, NC 28645	As indicated on attached exhibits	_____
Band Building and Workshop Facility 1116 College Ave, SW Lenoir, NC 28645	As indicated on attached exhibits	_____

TOTAL BID _____Summary of Applicable Warranties:

Estimated Project Start Date: _____

Estimated Project Completion Date: _____
 _____Officer Name and Title (Print): _____
 _____Signature: _____

Attach manufacturer's material sample and a copy of Contractor's License to the Bid Form

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLIANCE****CITY OF LENOIR****with N.C. E-Verify Statutes**

I, _____ (hereafter the "Affiant"), being duly authorized by and on behalf of
 _____ (hereafter "Contractor") after first being duly sworn hereby swears
 or affirms as follows:

1. Contractor understands that E-Verify is the federal E-Verify program operated by the United States Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies, or any successor or equivalent program used to verify the work authorization of newly hired employees pursuant to federal law in accordance with Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes; and
2. Contractor understands that an "Employer" as defined in NCGS§64-25(4), is required by law to use E-Verify to verify the work authorization of its employees through E-Verify in accordance with NCGS§64-26(a). The term "Employer" does not include State agencies, counties, municipalities, or other governmental bodies.
3. Contractor is a person, business entity, or other organization that transacts business in this State and that employs 25 or more employees in the state of North Carolina. (mark Yes or No)
 - a. YES _____
 - b. NO _____
4. Contractor will ensure compliance with E-Verify to the extent applicable and will ensure compliance by any subcontractors subsequently hired by Contractor to perform work under Contractor's contract with the City of Lenoir.

This ____ day of _____, 20 ____.

 Signature of Affiant

Print or Type Name: _____

(Affix Official/Notarial Seal)

State of _____

County of _____

Signed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me, this the _____

day of _____, 20 ____.

My Commission Expires:

Notary Public

NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT

The undersigned bidder or agent, being duly sworn on oath, says that he/she has not, nor has any other member, representative, or agent of the firm, company, corporation or partnership represented by him, entered into any combination, collusion or agreement with any person relative to the price to be bid by anyone at such letting nor to prevent any person from bidding nor to include anyone to refrain from bidding, and that this bid is made without reference to any other bid and without any agreement, understanding or combination with any other person in reference to such bidding.

He/She further says that no person or persons, firms, or corporation has, have or will receive directly or indirectly, any rebate, fee gift, commission or thing of value on account of such sale.

OATH AND AFFIRMATION

I HEREBY AFFIRM UNDER THE PENALTIES FOR PERJURY THAT THE FACTS AND INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE FOREGOING BID FOR PUBLIC WORKS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

Dated this ____ day of _____, _____

(Name of Organization)

(Title of Person Signing)

(Signature)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

STATE OF _____)
) ss
COUNTY OF _____)

Before me, a Notary Public, personally appeared the above named and swore that the statements contained in the foregoing document are true and correct.

Subscribed and sworn to me this _____ day of _____, _____.

Notary Public Signature

My Commission Expires: _____

**CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY
Under the Iran Divestment Act**

Pursuant to G.S. 147-86.59, any person identified as engaging in investment activities in Iran, determined by appearing on the Final Divestment List created by the State Treasurer pursuant to G.S. 147-86.58, is ineligible to contract with the State of North Carolina or any political subdivision of the State. The Iran Divestment Act of 2015, G.S. 147-86.55 *et seq.** requires that each vendor, prior to contracting with the State certify, and the undersigned on behalf of the Vendor does hereby certify, to the following:

1. that the vendor is not identified on the Final Divestment List of entities that the State Treasurer has determined engages in investment activities in Iran;
2. that the vendor shall not utilize on any contract with the State agency any subcontractor that is identified on the Final Divestment List; and
3. that the undersigned is authorized by the Vendor to make this Certification.

Vendor: _____

By: _____
Signature Date

Printed Name Title

The State Treasurer's Final Divestment List can be found on the State Treasurer's website at the address:
<https://www.nctreasurer.com/inside-the-department/OpenGovernment/Pages/Iran-Divestment-Act-Resources.aspx>
 and will be updated every 180 days. For questions about the Department of State Treasurer's Iran Divestment Policy, please contact Meryl Murtagh at Meryl.Murtagh@nctreasurer.com or (919) 814-3852.

* Note: Enacted by Session Law 2015-118 as G.S. 143C-55 *et seq.*, but has been renumbered for codification at the direction of the Revisor of Statutes.

City of Lenoir
Old Lenoir High School Roof Replacement Project - 2024
Contractor Bid Form (Revised)

Contractor Name: Barger Ashe Roofing Company
Contractor Address: P.O. Box 642
1211 Underdown Ave
Lenoir, NC 28645
Contractor License Number: 5976

Addendum No. 1 (initial): _____

Facility	Scope of Work	Bid
OLHS Gymnasium and Utility Facility 1116 College Ave, SW Lenoir, NC 28645	As indicated on attached exhibits	<u>153,375.00</u>
Band Building and Workshop Facility 1116 College Ave, SW Lenoir, NC 28645	As indicated on attached exhibits	<u>80,000.00</u>
TOTAL BID		<u>233,375.00</u>

Summary of Applicable Warranties:

20YR LABOR & MATERIAL AS SUPPLIED BY CONTRACTOR

Estimated Project Start Date: 3-1-24
Estimated Project Completion Date: 4-30-24

Officer Name and Title (Print): THOMAS SMITH

Signature: [Signature]

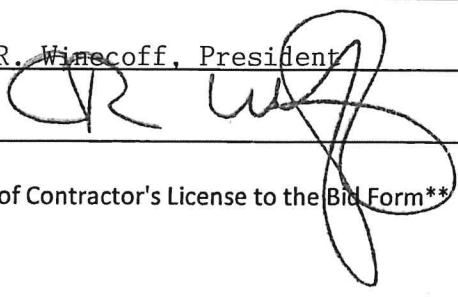
****Attach manufacturer's material sample and a copy of Contractor's License to the Bid Form****

City of Lenoir
Old Lenoir High School Roof Replacement Project - 2024
Contractor Bid Form (Revised)

Contractor Name: Tecta America Carolinas LLC
 Contractor Address: 13615 E. Independence Blvd.
Indian Trail, NC 28079
 Contractor License Number: NC 60043

Addendum No. 1 (initial): Facility	Scope of Work	Bid
OLHS Gymnasium and Utiltity Facility 1116 College Ave, SW Lenoir, NC 28645	As indicated on attached exhibits	<u>409,545.00</u>
Band Building and Workshop Facility 1116 College Ave, SW Lenoir, NC 28645	As indicated on attached exhibits	<u>210,760.00</u>
TOTAL BID		<u>620,305.00</u>

Summary of Applicable Warranties:

Estimated Project Start Date: March 11, 2024
 Estimated Project Completion Date: May 31, 2024
 Officer Name and Title (Print): C.R. Winecoff, President
 Signature: 

****Attach manufacturer's material sample and a copy of Contractor's License to the Bid Form****

Trivette's Roofing and Guttering, LLC

321 NC Highway 16 N
 Taylorsville, NC 28681 US
 +1 8286394258
 trivettesroofing@gmail.com
 www.trivettesroofing.com

**Estimate**

ADDRESS
 City Of Lenoir
 P.O. Box 958 Lenoir, NC

ESTIMATE 1262
 DATE 01/26/2024

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Services	*Maintenance Building, School, and Gymnasium Roofs, 102 Willow St SW Lenoir, NC*	23,980.00
	Roof structure replacement.	
	Demo roof structure.	
	Repair damaged area	
	Haul off any construction debris.	
	No electrical included.	
	All materials included.	
	Permits and inspections included.	
Services	All work to be completed in a professional manner and installed according to NC Building Code Specifications and installation specifications.	91,000.00
	All roof decking will be inspected for damage and replaced as necessary. We will offer 10 sheets or boards for free, but after wood replacement will be \$80.00 per sheet of OSB and \$50.00 per board.	
	Remove and dispose of all demolished materials as well as new materials from roof deck and property.	
	Furnish and install new insulation boards.	
	Furnish and install new TPO rubber roofing.	
	Furnish and install new screws and pads.	
	Furnish and install new plumbing pipe boots.	

Thank you for your business.

SUBTOTAL 114,980.00
 TAX 0.00

TOTAL

\$114,980.00

Accepted By

Accepted Date

CITY OF LENOIR
COUNCIL ACTION FORM

- I. **Agenda Item:** Resolution to designate agents to seek funding for the BRIC grant for the City of Lenoir Resilient Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure Project. This designation is part of the application process.
- II. **Background Information:** FEMA made available a grant opportunity for funding projects that improves or mitigates infrastructure that is located in flood hazard areas. The Utilities Department, working with the Western Piedmont COG, identified a potential project and submitted a grant application for 75% funding with a 25% local match. The project would involve the construction of an equalization basin to equalize the flow during severe rain events and a new septic tank receiving station at the Lower Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility. In addition, funds have been requested to replace the sewer line that follows Zack's Fork Creek from Pennell Street to the soccer complex on Zack's Fork Rd. The City of Lenoir is dedicated to contribute 25% of the overall cost, amounting to \$2,400,000.00, as matching funds from the Enterprise Fund for this \$9,600,000 project. The sewer line replacement is currently in the Utilities Department CIP. The equalization basin is part of a larger renovation project for Lower Creek also identified in the current CIP.
- III. **Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval to designate agents to seek funding for the BRIC grant for the City of Lenoir Resilient Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure Project. This designation is part of the application process.
- IV.
- V. **Reviewed by:**

City Attorney: _____

Finance Director: *Donna Bean*

Public Works/Public Utilities Director: _____

RESOLUTION DESIGNATION OF APPLICANT'S AGENT

North Carolina Division of Emergency Management

Organization Name (hereafter named Organization) CITY OF LENOIR	Disaster Number:
Applicant's State Cognizant Agency for Single Audit purposes (If Cognizant Agency is not assigned, please indicate):	
Applicant's Fiscal Year (FY) Start Month: JULY Day: 1ST	
Applicant's Federal Employer's Identification Number 56 - 6001265	
Applicant's Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Number 37 - 377 - 60	

PRIMARY AGENT	SECONDARY AGENT
Agent's Name SCOTT HILDEBRAN	Agent's Name DONNA BEAN
Organization CITY OF LENOIR	Organization CITY OF LENOIR
Official Position CITY MANAGER	Official Position FINANCE DIRECTOR
Mailing Address 801 WEST AVE 	Mailing Address 801 WEST AVE 
City, State, Zip LENOIR, NC 28645	City, State, Zip LENOIR, NC 28645
Daytime Telephone (828) 757-2200	Daytime Telephone (828) 757-2200
Facsimile Number	Facsimile Number
Pager or Cellular Number	Pager or Cellular Number

BE IT RESOLVED BY the governing body of the Organization (a public entity duly organized under the laws of the State of North Carolina) that the above-named Primary and Secondary Agents are hereby authorized to execute and file applications for federal and/or state assistance on behalf of the Organization for the purpose of obtaining certain state and federal financial assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief & Emergency Assistance Act, (Public Law 93-288 as amended) or as otherwise available. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above-named agents are authorized to represent and act for the Organization in all dealings with the State of North Carolina and the Federal Emergency Management Agency for all matters pertaining to such disaster assistance required by the grant agreements and **the assurances printed on the reverse side hereof**. BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the above-named agents are authorized to act severally. PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 20__.

GOVERNING BODY	CERTIFYING OFFICIAL
Name and Title	Name
Name and Title	Official Position
Name and Title	Daytime Telephone

CERTIFICATION

I, _____, (Name) duly appointed and _____ (Title) of the Governing Body, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution passed and approved by the Governing Body of _____ (Organization) on the _____ day of _____, 20__.

Date: _____

Signature: _____



CITY MANAGER
SCOTT E. HILDEBRAN

CITY OF LENOIR
NORTH CAROLINA

LENOIR, NORTH CAROLINA 28645-0958 • 828-757-2200

MAYOR
JOSEPH L. GIBBONS

CITY COUNCIL
J. T. BEAL
T. H. PERDUE
J. I. PERKINS
R. S. PRESTWOOD
K. ROGERS
D. F. STEVENS
C. D. THOMAS

January 31, 2024

NC Department of Public Safety
4201 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4201

RE: City of Lenoir Resilient Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure Project Match

The City of Lenoir is dedicated to contribute 25% of the overall cost, amounting \$2,400,000.00, as matching funds from the Enterprise Fund for this \$9,600,000 project. The funds are currently available for use as soon as the project receives approval.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Scott Hildebran", is written over a blue horizontal line.

Scott Hildebran
City Manager

LOCAL MATCH FUND COMMITMENT LETTER

1-31-2024

Steve McGugan
State Hazard Mitigation Officer
4238 MSC, Raleigh, NC 27699-4238

Re: BRIC2023 Subapplication

Dear Mr. McGugan:

As part of the Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities grant process, our sub-application in FEMA-Go offered a non-federal match of 25%. This letter serves as City of Lenoir's commitment to meet the local match fund requirements as proposed in the 2023 proposal.

SOURCE OF NON-FEDERAL FUNDS:

LOCAL
AGENCY
FUNDING
☒

OTHER NON-
FEDERAL
FUNDING
☐

PRIVATE NON-
PROFIT
FUNDING
☐

STATE
AGENCY
FUNDING
☐

**NAME OF FUNDING
SOURCE:**

Enterprise Fund

**FUNDS AVAILABILITY
DATE:**

10/1/2024

PROVIDE EXACT MONTH/DATE/YEAR OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

**FEDERAL SHARE
AMOUNT REQUESTED:**

\$7,200,000

MUST MATCH \$ AMOUNT PROVIDED IN SUBAPPLICATION

**LOCAL SHARE AMOUNT
MATCH:**

\$2,400,000

MUST EQUAL THE \$ AMOUNT PROVIDED IN THE SUBAPPLICATION

FUNDING TYPE:

**ADMINISTRATION, ENGINEERING FEES, CONSULTING FEES,
CONSTRUCTION, ETC**

EXAMPLES: ADMINISTRATION, CASH, CONSULTING FEES,
ENGINEERING FEES, FORCE ACCOUNT LABOR, AGENCY PERSONNEL,
PROGRAM INCOME, ETC.

Please contact Scott Hildebran at 828.757.2199 or with any questions.

Sincerely,



Scott Hildebran

City Manager

828.757.2199

shildebran@ci.lenoir.nc.us

CITY OF LENOIR
COUNCIL ACTION FORM

I. Agenda Item:

Adoption of the Downtown Lenoir Master Plan featuring The Campus as presented by the DLR Group, who engaged services from McGill Associates and Design Local.

II. Background Information:

The City of Lenoir entered into a contract with the DLR Group on October 18th, 2022 for the development of the Downtown Master Plan featuring The Campus (the Plan).

The Downtown Master Plan integrates the City's previous, ongoing, and planned future projects with research, analysis, and extensive community input, resulting in a comprehensive, realistic, and action-oriented final plan. Combining an analysis of Lenoir's existing conditions with market data and feedback from a diverse cross-section of the City of Lenoir community and Downtown stakeholders, including business leaders, elected officials, and City staff members. The result is a guide for continued downtown revitalization and redevelopment for the next 10 years.

Included in the Plan are the rehabilitation efforts of the city-owned Historic Lenoir High School, which has been re-branded as The Campus. The Campus includes an auditorium, a gymnasium, the Harper Band Building, and the historic Mack Cook Stadium. It is contiguous to Downtown's Municipal Service District (MSD) and is located in the downtown commercial district. The Plan includes recommendations for the highest and best uses for the Harper Band Building, Masonry Building, and the Mack Cook Stadium and outbuilding.

The DLR Group and City staff initiated the public input process for the development of the Plan in January 2023. Over the past year, staff has worked with the DLR Group, residents, property owners, community organizations, religious leaders, and other stakeholders with ties to the Downtown community to gain input and create a vision for the next 10 years.

The plan includes recommendations for design changes, ordinance changes, strategic code enforcement, strategic private development, and public investments to infrastructure, all aimed at the continued revitalization efforts of Downtown and providing a more attractive and traffic driving framework to the Downtown.

Adoption of the Plan does not commit the City to any funding but will direct staff to pursue the recommendations of the Plan for identified priority sections within Downtown Lenoir.

Andrew Gale of the DLR Group will be in attendance during the February 6, 2024 City Council meeting to present the final Downtown Lenoir Master Plan.

III. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends to City Council that the Downtown Master Plan featuring The Campus be adopted.

IV. Reviewed by:

City Attorney: _____

Finance Director: _____

Planning Director: _____

Economic Development Director: 

CITY OF LENOIR**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN FEATURING THE CAMPUS**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Lenoir previously requested that a Downtown Master Plan featuring The Campus be prepared by the DLR Group, who engaged services from McGill Associates and Design Local ; and,

WHEREAS, during the process, the DLR Group conducted considerable community and stakeholder engagement sessions which were included in each of the following phases of the plan: Phase 1: Project Initiation, Existing Conditions and Future Plan Analysis; Phase 2: Visioning and Initial Options Evaluation; Phase 3: Plan Development; Phase 4: Draft & Final Master Plan with Recommendations; and,

WHEREAS, a draft Downtown Master Plan was prepared based on analysis, evaluation and extensive citizen input obtained by conducting Advisory and Steering Committee Meetings; Stakeholder interviews (up to 10, including focus groups); Goals and Objectives Surveys (in person, online and bilingual); Numerous Community Meetings and Workshops held city-wide to present existing conditions and determine initial goals and aspirations (SWOT Analysis); and the Development of a micro-site for the project (bilingual); and

WHEREAS, City Council and City staff reviewed the Downtown Master Plan on January 23, 2024, to confirm the Plan's consistency with all other City initiatives and future projects; and,

WHEREAS, City Council, having thoroughly reviewed the draft Downtown Master Plan, has determined that it is in the public interest to approve this Downtown Master Plan for the City of Lenoir;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2024 Downtown Master Plan featuring The Campus, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and dated January 2024, is hereby approved and adopted as the official Downtown Master Plan for the City of Lenoir.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2024.

SEAL

Joseph L. Gibbons, Mayor, City of Lenoir

ATTEST:

Shirley M. Cannon, City Clerk