



# Town of Maysville, NC

Construction Professionals Network Institute:  
Workshop Summary

October 21, 2015 – October 22, 2015



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## Table of Contents

<b>Workshop Participants .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Session One: Tour, Overview of Town and Identification of Town Needs ....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Session Two: In-depth Discussion Regarding Individual Town Assets .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Session Three: CPNI Thoughts, Suggestions, and Observations .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Improving the Look of Main Street Storefronts .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Developers of Lakes on the White Oak .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Dollar Store.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Train Station &amp; Commercial Park.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Wastewater Treatment Plant .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Other Suggestions &amp; Recommendations .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Potential Sources and Uses of Grant Funding .....</b>	<b>13</b>

## **Workshop Participants**

The CPNI Team worked with Maysville leaders and volunteers, including:

- James Harper: Town Manager of Maysville
- Dan Ryan: Engaged citizen & volunteer
- Wayne Salem: President of Maysville Development Corporation
- Elwood Moore: Engaged citizen & volunteer
- David Elliot: Pastor of St. Luca Church in Maysville
- Robert Boomer: Engaged citizen & volunteer
- Judy Hills: Executive Director, Eastern Carolina Council of Governments in New Bern

The CPN Institute (CPNI) Team for Maysville consisted of the following members:

- Jeanine Bachtel: UNC-Charlotte, Charlotte
- Janet Brooks: Clark Nexsen, Charlotte
- Doug Burns: KSQ\Peterson, Charlotte
- Chris Busch: Geo-Hydro Engineers, Inc., Greensboro
- Pat Fogleman: Conference Resources and CPNI staff, Greensboro
- Thomas Frere: Economic Development Analyst, NCGrowth (UNC)
- Mark Little: Director, NCGrowth (UNC)
- John MacKay: MBP Carolinas, Inc., Raleigh
- James Schenck: Conner Gwyn Schenck PLLC, Raleigh



Pictured: CPNI Team excluding Doug Burns & Pat Fogleman

## **Session One: Overview of Town and Identification of Town Goals (10/21/15)**

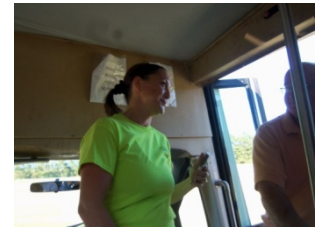
### **Discussion Regarding the Current State of Maysville & Town Statistics**

- Maysville is located between Jacksonville and New Bern. It is approximately 15 miles from Camp Lejeune.
- The town has a population of about 1000 people which comprises approximately 10% of Jones County's population. The town's population has been similar since around 1960. The median age in 2010 was approximately 35. Approximately 30% of the residents were under 21 years old.
- Maysville is on average a low income community where most people work out of county. That said, median income is skewed downwards because a lot of town residents are retired.
- Highway 17 is currently planned to bypass the community within four years.
  - The state has lined up money and purchased land for the transition to the new highway location
  - Hwy. 17 will now be to the west of town.
  - Maysville's main street is currently Highway 17 and the town will lose traffic with this transition.
  - Beach traffic will continue to go through Maysville because Highway 58 runs through the town to Emerald Isle.
- The town does have cable and broadband internet, but neither exists three miles outside of town because population density would not support the services.
  - Residents can use internet at the library and the town will soon have free Wi-Fi at the Frost Park.
- 90% of retail purchases are made out of county.
- One challenge for the town is that members of the town's leadership work to make a living and are not typically available during the day.
- The most read publication in Maysville is the Jacksonville Daily News.
  - This, The Kinston Free Press, and one more newspaper are owned by same people and have some of the same content.
  - The Jones Post is a weekly 4 page newspaper with one page dedicated to county stores.
- The military is Maysville's main economic engine.
  - In town today there are approximately 100 people directly associated with the Marine Corps.
  - Most purchasers of new homes are younger families





- mostly young Marines.
  - Many Marine Corps retirees come back to live in the areas surrounding Camp Lejeune.
- Maysville has section 8 housing including 2 apartment complexes and subsidized individual houses.
- Historically, schools have been a liability to Jones County and the town, but the town currently has a great superintendent who has brought in a host of good people to fill roles within the school system:
  - The county's high school has made a remarkable turnaround in performance. The graduation rate used to be around 46%, now approximately 6 years later the graduation rate is almost 84%, the highest of ten counties in the area and academic achievement is in the top third of state.
  - One of the county's elementary schools, Maysville Elementary, is doing a great job.
  - The county's current goal is to build a joint middle and high school.
  - Some people on edge of Jones County go to Parrot Academy near Kinston.
  - Otherwise, residents who live in Maysville typically enroll in public education.
  - Most students who attend Jones county schools get free lunch based on income.
- The Town has limited recreational opportunities, but it is addressing this issue.
  - The nearest senior center is in Trenton.
  - A downtown park is being renovated, is a very nice amenity for the town, and is attracting housing.
  - Most recreational activity consists of outdoors activities connected with the forests on the edge of town.



#### Discussion of Town Goals & Needs

- The town wants to capitalize on the strong natural assets surrounding the area.
  - Croatan National Forest borders the town and has largest black bear population in NC.
- Maysville wants to retain characteristics of a small town, while positioning itself as a good community for people who work at the beach but can't live on the beach because of cost.
- Maysville wants to be seen as a safe place to raise a family and be seen as a good alternative to other nearby towns.
- The town wants to figure out how to keep abandoned property appearances up:
  - Maysville has a small tax base which makes this a constant challenge.
- The town has minimal retail assets.

- A retail leakage study suggested opportunities for a hardware store, auto parts store, pharmacy, garden and feed store, and locally owned restaurants.

#### Town Assets Discussed and Identified in the First Session

- Old Quarries that are now scenic lakes:
  - A significant development had been planned around the lakes, but is currently stalled.
- Empty buildings and storefronts downtown
- Planned development near the town's elementary school:
  - This development is also stalled pending changes to Highway 17 plans.
- Old railroad depot building owned by town
- Retail buildings owned by the town
- Wastewater treatment plant and water treatment plant
- Town municipal building hosting the town office, police department, and fire station
- Abandoned railway bed running through town
- Commercial park
- Canal along the edge of town



#### Other assets were identified but not discussed at length

- Abandoned garment factory
- Hoffman Forest

#### The following Town assets were identified for further discussion

- Empty dollar store
- Historic train station
- Croatan National Forest gateway
- Commercial, downtown store fronts
- Lakes
- Water treatment plants



#### **Session Two: In-depth Discussion Regarding Individual Town Assets (10/22/15)**

- (*CPNI Question*) Are there any medical service providers near the town?
  - There is one pediatric care clinic in town.
  - People drive throughout the region to get to primary care providers in Pollocksville or Jacksonville, but there are no current plans to get a primary care provider here.
  - Carolina East is a big conglomerate right now and is looking to put urgent care facilities in places where they don't currently have a presence.
  - The community has reached out to pharmacies but there is no current interest because the numbers in Maysville don't work out – if the lake development occurred a pharmacy would be more likely to come.

- Lake Development:
  - Projected number of new homes: originally 186, now closer to 140.
- (CPNI Question) Other than the lakes, are there any other big subdivision developments that have been planned?
  - Johnson Farms (local developers James and Jeremy Johnson) built new homes by the park. They are a small builder and planned a development around where 17 was planned to go, but 17's route has changed and this development is on hold.
  - This potential development is located next to the elementary school and is close enough to the school so that families would be able to walk to school or bike to school.
- The town's current wastewater and water treatment plants have the capacity to handle new developments. If both planned developments occurred, they would push us to upper limits of treatment capacity – 180,000 gallons. Homes pay a tap fee when they tie into system.
- Zoning:
  - The county does not have any zoning ordinances.
  - Maysville has approximately 6 zoning districts and currently has many conflicts with zoning.
  - The Town's biggest challenge with zoning is that people don't like being told what they can or can't do with their property.
- The town owns: the municipal building where town hall is located, land by water plant, & the vacant dollar store directly across Hwy 17 from town hall.
  - The town is unable to acquire any more properties or fund significant projects on existing properties.

### **Session Three: CPNI Thoughts, Suggestions, and Observations (10/22/15)**

#### **Improving the Look of Main Street Storefronts:**

Concern: Two units are owned by the same person and the owner is reluctant to make any improvements. Multiple units appear rundown.

#### **Suggestions:**

- Main street programs are designed to help towns do this type of work – they are a source of strategies and potential money for localities that get into their program. Getting their resources can be helpful either way:
  - [NCcommerce.com/rd/main-street](http://NCcommerce.com/rd/main-street) → Main street solutions fund
  - Liz Parham is current director.
  - They provide technical assistance, training, and funding opportunities.
- A lot of cities and small towns have implemented store front leasing programs where the town goes to the store owner and can offer tax breaks, etc. in exchange for the rights to clean out the storefront and make the face to the street more attractive.
  - Windsor's town manager is an example of someone who successfully implemented a store front rental program.





- Windsor got money from a main street program to upgrade store fronts (clean, paint, etc) and a year later there was a business in every one of them.
- It is also possible to put something in the front of storefronts like children's artwork or community service announcements. Vacancy is unappealing. But, you don't always want the town manager or town government to approach building owners. These initiatives can be more successful if community groups reach out to owners.
- There is potential to leverage churches, community groups, and groups like Eagle Scouts to suggest community service projects that can benefit the town. For example: A church could approach a store owner and say "We are doing a community service campaign, could we do this for you?" Examples of volunteer projects can include: painting store fronts, putting posters in store windows, and advertising community improvements.
- There is a point at which stores and buildings can become so neglected that you can take legal action against the owner – the primary concern with this option is that the town doesn't have the financial or human resources to take down buildings that have been condemned.
- Consider recruiting people with businesses or churches to start a Merchant's Association:
  - People in from Main Street Programs probably know how to go about starting a downtown association.
- Create an initiative to create a small historic conservation district in the commercial and residential blocks around the business district. A collective assembly of buildings, even specialty shops and restaurants, could emerge, but would have to be promoted with regional appeal as a destination place.



Pictured: Underutilized storefronts along Highway 17 (Main Street) in Maysville





## **Developers of Lakes on the White Oak:**

### **Suggestions:**

- Talk to developers about the possibility of a concession agreement to allow community members access to the water.
- It is also possible to see if the developers will open up a private rental business allowing canoe & kayak usage to community members.
- Given the potential of the rock quarry lakes, consider mixed-use zone, higher density to make a project economically feasible on the property. The Town could possibly create an overlay district adjacent to the proposed development it be high density and higher mixed use development. Avoid creating conventional "strip development" if at all possible. Instead of spreading it over a large area, concentrate the infrastructure developed to serve the proposed subdivisions.



Pictured: One of three scenic lakes

### Dollar Store:

- The town needs to generate revenue with the building.
- Mayville's idea is to potentially renovate and find a tenant. Quick calculations indicate that the town would need approximately \$5.5/sf rent to pay its mortgage on the property.
- A few retailers that could be beneficial to the town include a hardware store, pharmacy, & clinic.
- Ace Hardware has told the town that the building could work if they had an investor.
- The Town Council is opposed to selling the building & would rather have Lenoir Community College use the space, but LCC is not be willing to pay rent for the space.

### Suggestions:

- See if you can put a pharmacy in one third of the building, a P.A. in 1/3rd, and LCC for the remainder.
- If you wanted to do so, the first thing to do would be to go to a medical provider in the region and say "do you have any interest in putting a mini-clinic here?" Ask if they can put in a P.A. and tell them that you will give them a good deal
- Many providers are currently building mini clinics right now.
- The town's current pediatric office and dental office appear to be successful – this could be used as a business case to demonstrate how a pharmacy and primary care/urgent care clinic could be successful as well

Pictured: Vacant dollar store building on Highway 17, owned by the town



## **Train Station & Commercial Park:**

### Suggestions:

- This property is a gateway to town and the National Forest, and will continue to be when the highway bypass is constructed. It should welcome visitors as well as serving as a commercial hub.
- HUD or National Railway Association may be sources of funding to develop this asset.
- Tim Simmons – Dept. of History and Archives for the state can be a resource; questions for him could include:
  - What is the state doing with old rail houses?
  - How are other similar buildings being used by other localities?
  - Who else should I speak to?
- The Development Finance Initiative at the UNC Chapel Hill School of Government may be able to provide support or advice for projects with this building.
  - The more specific the projects you have in mind for them the more they may be able to help you. They will also be able to talk about potential Tax Credit sources.
  - They may also be able to look at grants related to developments in the area including the dollar store owned by the town.



- ICSC (International Council of Shopping Centers) and perhaps NAIOP may be able to give ideas about what to do with the property.
  - They are a commercial real estate professional network with three chapters in NC.
  - A lot of members are commercial office park developers and commercial developers.
- The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a potential source for funding and information.

Pictured: Old rail road depot building located in Maysville's commercial park



## Wastewater Treatment Plant:

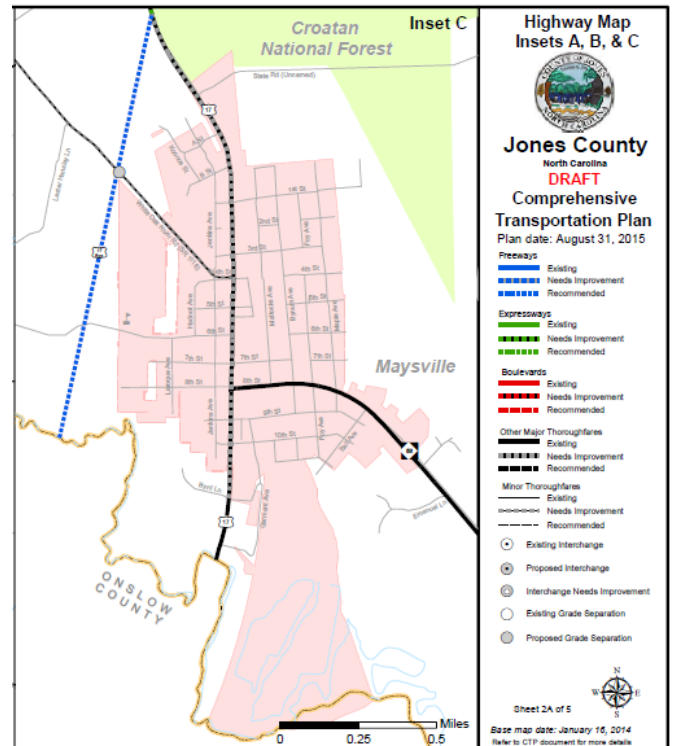
- The last three engineers who have looked at the plant said that it was engineered inefficiently and said that it needs equalization basins.
- The town still has some I&I issues and needs to find a Grade 2 certified employee to manage the plant.

## Suggestions:

- If an engineer mentioned that the system is inefficient then you need to do whatever you can to get money and make it more efficient.
- Get a lifecycle cost analysis done to analyze any future recommendations & changes.
- Look into the size of the lines going into the waste water treatment plant to make sure they are large enough to support future development.
- The EPA's Hardship Grants Program for Rural Communities is a potential source of funding for these types of products.

## Other Suggestions & Recommendations:

- Look at the macro and micro levels of where the town needs and wants to be.
  - For example, look at New Bern and Jacksonville's growth patterns over time. Both communities are still growing and Maysville is located between the two of them.
  - Think through the question, "How can Maysville benefit from growth pattern of those two larger communities?"
- A conditional zoning district has the potential to solve a lot of problems in Maysville.
  - Again, the guiding question is how can you take advantage of the growth coming from New Bern and Jacksonville and plan the correct zoning for this area.
  - Maysville can strongly benefit from the growth of those two areas. A lot of planning would be involved in figuring out how to set up the right zoning.
  - There are strong intersections in Maysville – the big question is how can the town make those intersections really helpful to future growth?
- Personal observation from CPNI: be careful about holding up growth and development based on what *might* happen with the DOT and Highway 17. It could take much longer for Highway 17 to be diverted than you think. Deal with this when and if it happens. In the meantime, keep working with the developer on the lake and other potential growth prospects.





## **Potential Sources and Uses of Grant Funding**

- EPA Hardship Rural Grant:
  - Can be used for wastewater improvements.
  - Maysville meets all of the criteria for the grant.
  - The town can apply for the grant to be used towards these improvements.
- There is potential to seek out grants for old rail buildings.
- Americantrails.org is a clearing house for trail grants if the town wants to develop recreation trails.
- NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation helps with the planning of trails and planning grants. It is possible that the DOT could be excited about having a bike trail be part of a road going through the Croatan.
- Find someone at Lenoir Community College to see if anyone does grant training.
  - It's possible to use Maysville as a project base for someone training students to source grants and apply for them. ECU is an example of a school that helps people with grants. Mark Little with NC Growth is also someone you can reach out to ask about how to source grants.
  - Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- There are a lot of grants available – the trouble is finding them. It is also important to make sure you have consensus from town leaders about what to use grants for before applying for them.

Contact Information:

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