

Building a Village Center and Creating Intentional Growth in the Village of Marvin, NC



NCGrowth-SmartUp Report July 2020

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NCGrowth  SmartUp



ABOUT NCGROWTH-SMARTUP

NCGrowth-SmartUp is an award-winning applied economic development university center with a goal of directly addressing inequality, poverty, underemployment, and other factors that keep people and communities from reaching their greatest potential. NCGrowth's team includes expert staff across the Carolinas, academic advisors from multiple universities, and hundreds of local partners. Together we are transforming communities by (1) providing technical support to promising businesses so they can grow, hire more people, and create wealth; (2) helping towns/counties/tribes create robust local economies with equitable opportunities for residents; and (3) providing policymakers across the U.S. the tools to learn how to achieve success. Learn more at ncgrowth.unc.edu.

NCGrowth-SmartUp is part of CREATE, an economic development research center at the UNC Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise working to tackle the problem of severe and increasing wealth inequality by generating shared economic prosperity through a combination of research, data analytics, homegrown interventions and policy development. Learn more at createprosperity.unc.edu.

This work is supported by the Economic Development Administration and the Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise.

ABOUT CPNI

The Construction Professionals Network Institute, Inc. (CPNI) is a non-profit initiative focusing on construction industry-related projects and community service throughout the State of North Carolina. CPNI volunteers its members' design and construction industry expertise as a catalyst to empower communities across North Carolina to improve their physical and economic environment. CPNI offers the comprehensive professional and technical expertise of its membership and collaborating partners in the form of workshops tailored to assist communities and engage local governments and community leaders to facilitate discussions and efforts toward redevelopment strategy, community engagement, visioning, and financial considerations.

Learn more at www.cpni-nc.org.

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CPNI Workshop Team

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Phil Jones, Retired –UNCC

Julie McLaurin, AIA, NCARB, LEED, Little

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Jess Wilkinson, Economic Development Manager – NCGrowth

Rachel Taylor, Economic Development Analyst – NCGrowth

Austin Amandolia, Economic Development Analyst – NCGrowth

Demetrius Cox, Economic Development Analyst – NCGrowth

Village of Marvin Attendees

Rohit Ammanamanchi, Village Planner

Joe Pollino, Mayor

Russ O'Dell, Community Member

David Coates, Community Member

Kristyna Culp, Community Member

Maria Prebus, Community Member

Melinda Daniel, Community Member

Will Owens, Community Member

Executive Summary



On June 11 and 12, 2020, CPNI members and NCGrowth staff met with officials, residents, and community members from the Village of Marvin for a two-day virtual workshop. CPNI and NCGrowth conducted this workshop virtually in order to maintain social distance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Village of Marvin incorporated in 1994 to prevent future annexation into Charlotte. Village residents have expressed a desire to maintain the existing rural character of Marvin while fostering a sense of community. As such, the Village is now examining the possibility of creating central communal space where residents can gather.

The workshop opened with a brief overview of the goals and process for the workshop and by discussing the possibility of developing a village center. During the workshop, the discussion focused on the current built assets and potential sites for commercial and residential development. Marvin has several private owners, including local religious institutions and residents, located near the proposed village center, who are interested in thoughtful development. Potential development includes locally owned commercial space, greenways, and limited residential properties.

Additional concerns raised by Marvin officials and local residents include high traffic volumes, the need for more affordable housing options, and strategies for ensuring homegrown commercial development as opposed to development of large chains. Town staff also expressed the need for advice around economic development considerations, such as the potential impact on jobs, population, traffic, and school systems.

This CPNI/NCGrowth Recommendation Report provides the following information:

- An overview of the two-day workshop
- An outline of existing village plans
- A virtual tour of the potential site
- Case studies to spark design ideas
- Recommendations:
 - Overview of strategies to successfully meet village center goals
 - Keys to conducting stakeholder engagement to foster community buy-in
 - Considerations for thoughtful development of the village center

Workshop Overview (Demetrius)



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Workshop Agenda

Village of Marvin *Virtual* Workshop Agenda

Day One: Thursday, June 11, 2020

1. **Introductions:** 1:00 pm to 1:15 pm
 - a. Village of Marvin
 - b. Design Team
2. **Virtual Town Tour and Town Summary** 1:15 pm to 2:00 pm
 - a. Google Earth
 - b. Aerial Photographs
 - c. Maps
3. **Overview Summary** 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
 - a. History and Culture
 - b. Physical Character (Environmental, Topography, Landscape, Utilities, Transportation)
 - c. Buildings-Structural Evaluation
 - d. Demographics
 - e. Market and Economic Conditions
 - f. Land Use and Property Ownership
 - g. Existing Planning and Zoning Documents
 - i. Allowable Uses
 - ii. Site Design
 - iii. Street Cross-Sections
 - h. Regulatory Process
4. **Break** 3:00 pm to 3:15 pm
5. **Case Study – Badin** 3:15 pm to 4:00 pm

Village of Marvin *Virtual* Workshop Agenda

Day Two: Friday, June 12, 2020

1. **Visioning:** 9:00 am to 10:30 am
 - a. Assets
 - b. Goals and aspirations
 - c. Opportunities and Challenges
 - i. Allowable uses and site design
 - d. CPNI only
 - i. Program Development
 - ii. Resources
 - iii. Partners
 - iv. Project Delivery/Contracts
 - v. Procurement
 - vi. Budget
 - vii. Priorities/Schedule/Phasing
2. **Break:** 10:30 am to 10:45 am
3. **Recommendations:** 10:45 am to 12:00 pm

Existing City Plans

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Virtual Tour of Village Center

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Figure 1 Map of Parcels for Proposed Village Center

By having a master plan, Marvin can make informed decisions regarding which projects to engage in based on a variety of factors, including funding and support. Marvin can use a master plan to create a budget and grant application guide for specific projects. Additionally, the village can leverage the master plan to collaborate with the local construction industry in the planning and development process from an early stage and help to develop relationships. Master plans can also be used to help build a relationship with potential project donors or "champions" or facilitate public-private partnerships.

Reasons for the Village of Marvin to Create a Master Plan

- To create a long-term vision for the Village of Marvin
- To control development and growth toward that vision through incremental phases
- To ensure the future is considered and well planned for through:
 - Creating a land use plan
 - Creating a guide for future zoning, overlay districts for mixed-use, and conditional uses
 - Creating a plan for built assets that include:
 - architectural standards and guidelines,
 - historical designation for standalone buildings or a Historic District,
 - plans for conditions assessments, environmental assessments, best use and practice, and decommissioning.
 - Planning for the growth of municipal departments
 - Engaging the community and intentionally seeking buy-in from community stakeholders

Strategies for Master Planning

1. **Visioning:** works backward from the overarching long-term vision down to more specific actionable steps.
 - During the workshop, stakeholders and the CPNI team emphasized the vision of a village center that enhances the character of Marvin, while still providing space for some office, living, and commercial space.
2. **Incremental planning:** a realistic approach that makes small changes, evaluates them, and moves on to the next phase.
 - Phases in incremental planning can begin with creating a five-year plan divided into increments of one year to achieve specific phases of development.
3. **Analytical planning** uses in-depth analysis to improve the strategic fit between the village and the environment by examining many opportunities and challenges. The analytical approach relies on market research to determine the feasibility and impact of different planning items in the community. The strategic plan should account for changes in the environment, such as changing laws and collaborators.

Master planning should seek to facilitate buy-in from other stakeholders, such as council members and a diverse and representative set of community members. The comprehensive master plan also provides an umbrella under which other master plans can reside, such as a land-use plan, parks and recreation master plan, and a master plan for addressing built assets.

By engaging in this planning process, Marvin can provide a platform to build relationships within municipal government and lay the groundwork for building collaborative partnerships with other local governments, private businesses, and non-profit organizations. Through this process, stakeholders will be more aware of the unique problems facing the village while also being able to focus on the overall goal of enhancing the characteristics that the people of Marvin value.

The costs associated with master planning are the time and labor spent in the planning process, the potential disagreement during strategic planning meetings, as well as the possible loss of initiative and momentum.

The CPNI team recommends preparing a detailed physical master plan for the Village Center. The purpose of which is to illustrate how buildings and parking are recommended to work logistically.

Next Steps to Create a Master Plan

The master planning process should include the following steps:

Step 1: Build the infrastructure necessary to develop a plan.

- Appoint a planning committee
- Distribute master planning literature to the entire committee and invested stakeholders
 - This should include existing consolidated plans, land use maps, zoning maps, and a comprehensive land assemblage plan
- Decide on a facilitator or consultant
 - This can be a member of the local government or a paid or volunteer consultant

Step 2: Decide how many years the strategic plan will cover.

- The CPNI team recommends that a five to ten-year vision guide the process, with a five-year strategic plan and shorter incremental phases of one year.

Step 3: Put in writing the timetable and process.

Step 4: Prepare a memo on what is expected of the master planning process.

- Send to the planning committee
- Highlight significant problems to be addressed

Step 5: Have the village council approve the planning process and fund it.

Step 6: Send out the orientation materials and schedule the first meeting.

- Make a plan for public input and diverse community engagement

Community and Economic Development Strategies

Economic Development

The economic development implications of a village center largely depend on how Marvin decides to develop. Marvin residents and officials have expressed a desire for limited commercial development and local business development. This context is important in shaping the economic development considerations for the village. A summary of possible impacts includes:

- Job creation
- Limited population growth and school system impact
- Limited traffic impact
- Commercial sales taxes

Before continuing, it is worth noting that economic development discussions are nuanced, and this report will focus only on high-level considerations. Further research will be necessary to better understand the economic development impacts of the tentative village center.

Job Creation

The number of jobs supported by the village center will depend on the type of commercial establishments developed. Without a clearer vision of what types of development will occur (e.g., restaurants, coffee shops, etc.), job impacts are mostly speculation. One tool for understanding how new facilities will impact the local economy is conducting an economic impact assessment. Impact assessments measure the potential economic impact of bringing new economic activity into a region. More importantly, impact analyses reveal what drives economic growth and what does not, which helps inform decision-making.

New jobs have ripple effects through a region. When a new business locates in a region, it creates new jobs both directly and indirectly. Direct jobs are a result of the new company. Indirect job creation is a result of business-to-business spending. For example, if a coffee shop moves to town, there may be new jobs created in the coffee growers industry. Lastly, the new jobs result in more household spending, which further impacts industries providing household goods. These effects are often modest and highly depend on the industries already present with a region.

Population Growth and Schools

The amount of population and school growth will largely depend on the amount of residential development included in the village center. Commercial development alone will have minimal impacts, if any, on population growth and school systems. This is especially true if the commercial development focuses on lower-wage work, such as food service, as employees will likely be unable to afford units in the existing housing stock.

Regarding residential development, there is only one plot currently being considered for residential development in the Village of Marvin. The Lett property is approximately 26 acres, resulting in a maximum of 26 additional housing units under current zoning patterns. The average household size in Marvin is 3.5 persons¹, so a crude estimate would suggest a population growth of 91 persons, 39 of which would be school-aged. This assumes full occupancy, that no existing residents move into the units, and that all the units are single-family. These numbers are crude estimates, and a more specific site plan would lend itself to more accurate numbers.

Limited Traffic Impact

Again, without a full traffic impact analysis, it is hard to predict the traffic impacts of the development of a village center. Similar to the issue of job creation, traffic impact is something that can be managed by thoughtful development of the village center and the adjacent neighborhoods. For example, as it stands, the village center is only accessible by vehicle, meaning that any increased development in the village center would likely increase traffic as residents would have to drive out of their subdivision to access the village center. On the other hand, constructing sidewalks and nature trails adjacent to the subdivisions would promote walking and biking, which would have a minimal impact on traffic and could lead to a greater push for more active transportation throughout Marvin. These services could also appeal to neighboring subdivisions who are currently outside of the boundaries of Marvin.

Consideration of Commercial Sales Tax

Implementing a commercial sales tax will confer certain advantages to the Village of Marvin as a sales tax can support future service expansion, such as more walkways and traffic mitigation. Ultimately, any commercial tax should align with the goals of Marvin.

Currently, the state sales tax rate is 4.75%, and Union County's is 2%. Surrounding municipalities, such as Weddington and Waxhaw², currently have no additional sales tax. The benefit of having an additional sales tax for Marvin is that it provides discretionary spending for Marvin, rather than those tax dollars being distributed throughout the rest of the county.

If Marvin chooses to take the same course as the surrounding areas, there will be no extra village revenue from sales taxes. However, Marvin would likely see a modest boost from property taxes. Lastly, it is worth noting that an economic impact analysis would also capture the impact on local taxes.

Community Development and Land Use

Marvin has the opportunity to engage in intentional community development and land-use practices to ensure the village center meets the short- and long-term needs of the community.

¹ 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

² Data from Avalara.

Considerations for execution include implementing new governance structures, context-sensitive development, and innovative land-use practices.

Many local governments have or work with community development organizations that inform the development patterns of neighborhoods. This can range from advisory boards to formal non-profit organizations. Marvin **could** decide to form a new board or commission of local residents who inform the village center and future development process. Since the Planning Board is already involved, this could take the form of a subcommittee or alternatively, an entirely new board appointed by the Council. This would add more voices to the process, put more accountability on development projects, and ensure the community could implement tightly controlled development within the village center. Other comparable options are a village center advocacy group or task force.

On the more formal side are entities such as Community Development Corporations (CDCs). CDCs are non-profit, community-based organizations that focus on neighborhood development planning, incorporating issues of economic development, affordable housing, public health, and other issues that impact community health.³ Frequently, these organizations funnel federal and philanthropic funds to provide community benefits.

Apart from creating governing structures, Marvin can use context-sensitive development and innovate land-use practices to meet community goals, such as more diverse housing options, while ensuring the built character of Marvin remains consistent. This includes developing multifamily homes that follow the same design patterns as existing homes in Marvin.

One way to enforce such development patterns is through form-based zoning codes. Traditional land-use codes focus on the use of buildings (i.e., commercial, residential, industrial, etc.), which can lead to disjointed building design. Alternatively, form-based codes spell out the design requirements for new developments, which both preserves community character and provides more certainty for developers about what developments will and will not be accepted. Further, form-based codes can be blended with more traditional zoning codes to ensure the building character is preserved and that the village only brings in the type of institutions they desire.

Overall, engaging in these community development strategies can help Marvin ensure the desired intentionality is brought to the village center planning process. These recommendations should be conducted with engagement from the community and should identify a point person or organization to lead the process.

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³ For more info, visit: <https://community-wealth.org/strategies/panel/cdcs/index.html>

Next Steps for Community and Economic Development Strategies

E.g.:

- Conduct appropriate impact analyses
- Design and work with village council to approve form-based codes

Strategies for Fostering Stakeholder Engagement

The purpose of community engagement is to involve the public according to increasing levels of public impact. The Village of Marvin can build community engagement and buy-in based on the goals of the project. The CPNI team recommends setting up a variety of visioning sessions for a broad cross-section of community input. With certain aspects of the planning process, the Village of Marvin can also promote Participatory Planning, which could be open to all residents. Below is a table that illustrates increasing levels of public impact based on different goals.

Increasing Level of Public Impact*				
*Table adapted from IAP2 content provided through the UNC SOG Community Development Academy				
Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal: Provide the public with objective information to aid them in understanding the problems, alternatives, and/or solutions of proposed change.	Goal: Obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	Goal: Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	Goal: Partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.	Goal: Place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise: Local government will keep citizens informed.	Promise: Local government will keep citizens informed, listen to, and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	Promise: Local government will work with citizens to ensure that their concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternative developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	Promise: Local government will look to citizens for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate their advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	Promise: Local government will implement what the public decides.

Examples: Fact sheets, web sites, open houses	Example: Public comment, focus groups, surveys, public meetings	Example: Workshops, Deliberative polling	Example: Citizen Advisory Committees, Consensus-building, Participatory decision-making	Example: Citizen Juries, Ballots, Delegated Decisions
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Next Steps for Fostering Stakeholder Engagement

Eg.

- Schedule visioning session to inform form-based codes, streetscaping designs, business development

Village Center: Strategies for Development, Thoughtful Planning, and Leveraging Assets

Village Center: Location Options

Marvin can locate the Village Hall in several potential locations, each with its own benefits. Village halls can be centerpieces of town centers. The extent to which that is true for Marvin depends on the community's desires and its vision for a town center. What follows are some options to consider.

As mentioned above, the two churches in the middle of the potential village center are historical centerpieces of Marvin, pointing to a common space where residents have historically gathered. There are two prominent opportunities in leveraging this central location. First, the village hall can locate in between the two churches to provide a well-defined town center. Second, the village can negotiate with the Methodist church to lease the space. Since the church is currently not hosting regular services, this could provide an opportunity for the church to receive some extra income while providing a central place for people together to engage in civic activity.

Alternatively, the Village Hall can locate on either side of the two churches. Both have benefits dependent on the supporting development. For example, locating the Village Hall to the west of the Presbyterian church could be advantageous if other commercial office space is developed in the area. This would allow community groups to host meetings near the town hall and could promote a central civic space. On the other hand, the Village Hall could locate to the east of the Methodist church, where restaurants and retail are likely to locate. This has the advantage of giving residents a place to gather before or after meetings at the village hall. If greenspace is

Commented [WJ9]: Make options stand out in this section using bullet points or numbers for the options. Or create subheaders for each option and describe below the headers.

incorporated, it also enables a unique mixture of public space, civic activity, and local restaurants for residents to gather.

Finally, there is also the opportunity of locating near the historic general store. This would fit within the development on the eastern portion of the village center. The general store could be converted to a museum focusing on the history of Marvin. This use complements the Village Hall by reminding residents of the history of the village while engaging in civic activity.

These are all specific considerations for the Village Hall. It is important to ensure the location fits well with the rest of the village center and is connected to the village in thoughtful ways. Incorporating greenways and sidewalks will be key to connecting residents to the Village Hall, as will be mentioned in the next section. Overall, the Village Hall can be a catalyst for the potential village center and can play whatever role Marvin sees best.

Village Center: Design

Thoughtful considerations of the village center design will ensure the community's rural character is maintained. If chosen, the process of developing a strategic master plan can help codify the design preferences to ensure developers meet their commitments. Whether or not Marvin chooses to implement a strategic plan, clearly communicating design decisions will be key to meeting Marvin's goals. What follows are some themes and considerations that were discussed during the workshop.

First and foremost, setting the village center boundaries will be a crucial aspect of ensuring a cohesive and connected place to gather. Officials might even consider zoning a village center district to make clear where these commercial activities should locate. This could help prevent further spill-over effects into the surrounding land.

One way to ensure the rural character is preserved is to engage in small "pod"-like development that focuses on clustering small buildings together with room for open space between the pods and the highway. Included in this development would be off-street parking that would locate behind the commercial buildings so that they are less visible from the street. This would also help preserve the rural character by avoiding on-street or parallel parking.

Another consideration for designing the village center relates to walkability, greenspace, and connectivity. Based on current conversations, it seems likely that the village center will develop in four distinct groups, each divided by either a highway or non-developable parcels. Because of this, connecting the four corners will be vital to ensuring a cohesive village center. Sidewalks are an obvious aspect of this. These walkways can be set-back from the highway with street trees included to ensure the rural feel remains. Another option is to have meandering walkways that take users further away from the highway (e.g., behind the two churches) and into more of the open greenspace. As will be mentioned later, raised crosswalks will ensure connectivity across the highway while also serving as a traffic calming measure.

An extension of that is to consider creating village green areas, with large fields of open space for people to congregate, host events, and enjoy being outdoors. Such a common space will increase opportunities for residents to connect in a common space and will enhance the overall appeal of the village center. This could even provide space for a farmer's market, music or festival events, and other community activities.

Village Center: Built Assets

Historic District Designation

The CPNI team recommends that the Village of Marvin designate the village center as a special historic preservation district, which will allow the village to access Historic State and Federal Tax Credits along with Historic District Contributing Structures and the National Registrar of Historic Places. By creating a historic district, the village can leverage this district to incentivize and expedite the development process. The team also recommends that the village establish a historic district organization to work together with the village center efforts to apply for grants and ensure that the character of these historic Marvin buildings is maintained. This organization can also work to acquire properties and engage in public-private partnerships. The CPNI team recommends that the village develop a plan for reuse of all available historic buildings and sites, including the White residence, the historic general store, and the cemeteries. Preservation NC offers guidance and additional resources for rehabilitating historic buildings. More information about Preservation NC, the State Historic Preservation Office, and other resources for historic districts and tax credits can be found in the resources section.

Churches

The CPNI team recommends that the Village of Marvin continue efforts to collaborate with the Methodist and Presbyterian churches to either acquire the property or obtain a lease agreement to use the space. The team suggests that the Methodist church would be a suitable location for the Village Hall or a farm-to-table restaurant. More suggestions for existing buildings will be addressed in the following section. Additionally, the village could reuse a portion of the adjacent open space, currently owned by the Presbyterian church, for a public gathering space, Village festivals, music or entertainment venues, or a farmer's market. A collaborative approach to using the open space would allow for joint use of the church property between the church and the village.

Compatible Building Uses

Based on the workshop discussions, the CPNI team recommends the village adopt mixed uses for the village center that are low-traffic generators. The team also suggests a general strategy of locating office spaces on the west end of New Town Road and retail on the south end near the historic general store and the roundabout. Suggested building uses are listed below:

- Café, ice cream shop, coffee, pastry shop

- Farm-to-Table restaurant
- Small 1- to 2-person office uses such as professional services

Public Gathering Space

One of the main goals for the Village Center discussed during the workshop was the need to create a public gathering space. With Marvin Efird Park disconnected from the town, it was important for residents to have a space for music, food trucks, or a farmers market that they could easily access, and that would continue to enhance the sense of community in the village. The CPNI team suggests that this space could be provided by working with the churches to acquire or lease the open space currently owned by the Presbyterian church. In this way, the open space would provide a public gathering point while still providing the flexibility to accommodate many different uses.

Marvin Efird Park

The Village of Marvin currently owns Marvin Efird Park, located approximately 1.7 miles from the proposed village center. This provides several potential opportunities for the future, including selling, preserving land, and connecting to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Two key facts make selling Marvin Efird Park a natural decision. 1) Current development discussions revolve around the proposed village center, and the money acquired by selling could be used to develop greenspace in the village center. 2) The park as it stands is disconnected from the rest of the village, making it appear disjointed and difficult to connect to the rest of the community.

If Marvin chose to sell the land, the funds could be dedicated to greenscaping the village center to align with current plans around open space and walkways. Alternatively, such funds could also enable the village to execute a multi-year land lease to secure land that could house the village hall or public open space. It is also worth noting that a 5.43-acre plot of land adjacent to the Park is currently priced at \$475K, demonstrating the potential gain of selling the park.⁴

Another consideration for the Park is that the Village of Marvin currently owns it, enabling the village to preserve existing land, which is already scarce in the region. Preserving the land presents the possibility of connecting the park to surrounding neighborhoods. This, of course, has the immediate complication of needing to annex those neighborhoods first. However, offering walkable access to the surrounding communities may lead those areas to explore voluntary annexation to benefit from the new service. Further, this path would increase the overall walkability – and quality of life – of Marvin.

⁴ According to [LandSearch.com](https://www.landsearch.com)

Pedestrian Circulation and Streetscape Improvements

The CPNI team recommends that the village take pedestrian circulation and streetscape improvements into consideration as the designs for the Village Center are formulated. The village should consider adding a variety of traffic calming measures such as a traffic officer and blend connectivity with these measures through mechanisms like raised crosswalks, signage, and lighting. The team also recommends adding connectivity and walkability as a means of attracting people to the village center and providing a service that might attract future annexation endeavors. Through walkways that are offset from the road, the village can tie existing neighborhoods with pedestrian circulation. These walkways can also tie together existing and proposed greenway plans. The Village of Marvin can incorporate walkability and streetscape improvements while still maintaining the rural “low-density” design. Below is an example from Smart Growth America⁵ for how to implement safety and improve pedestrian circulation in a rural area. While the current use and traffic on New Town Road may still raise some safety concerns, this type of “complete street” could be implemented if the town chose to create a “development pod” for the Village Center area. Comprehensive design ideas for complete streets in a variety of urban contexts can be found.



Figure 3 Example of Complete Streets in a Rural Setting Source: Smart Growth America

⁵ August 10 and 2017, “Implementing Complete Streets in Small Towns and Rural Communities.”

Next Steps for Creating a Village Center

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Appendices

Appendix A: Lessons from Case Studies

Appearance

The CPNI team suggests that the Village of Marvin look to other communities to develop appearance precedents. Below are several examples of communities that the team suggested.

Pinehurst, NC, is an example of a small community that integrated churches and residential with a compact city center.



Figure 4 Pinehurst, NC Source: vopnc.org

Valle Crucis, NC, is home to the original Mast General Store which provides a unique shopping experience as well as a gathering place to listen to music.



Figure 5 Mast General Store in Valle Crucis, NC Source: Google Maps

Located on the Outer Banks, Ocracoke, NC, provides an excellent example of low-density development.



Figure 6 Ocracoke Coffee Company Source: Trip Advisor

St. James, NC, designed a building with the dual purpose of housing the town hall as well as a community center.



Figure 7 St. James Town Hall and Community Center Source: PGHArchitecture.com

Batesville, VA turned a historic rural market into an upscale country shop, farm to table restaurant, and music venue.



Figure 8 Batesville Market Source: Google Maps



Figure 9 Batesville Market-Shop and Music Venue Source: nbc29.com

Cameron, NC, provides an example of a small-scale village with residential and specialty retail.



Figure 10 Cameron, NC Source: Google Maps

Bath, NC, is home to specialty shops in a low-density setting.



Figure 11 Blackbeard's Slices and Ices-Family-Owned Pizzeria Source: Google Maps

Finally, Corolla, NC, presents an example of space development with an emphasis on walkability.



Figure 12 Corolla, NC Source: Google Maps

Annexation

As cities continue to grow, the desire for access to services is a significant factor in voluntary annexation initiatives. Most property owners seek services such as access to utilities, road maintenance, and zoning.

Additionally, property owners may seek annexation by one community to avoid being annexed by another municipality.⁶ In addition to services, the following are cited as motivations for annexation:⁷

- political motivations
- community identity
- environmental concerns
- economic development opportunities
- accessibility and responsiveness of local officials

As the area continues to urbanize, the desire to engage in voluntary annexation will likely increase as cities and municipalities are better equipped to provide the necessary services. As with most public initiatives, public participation and engagement are integral to the voluntary annexation process.

The case studies below illustrate different motivations and considerations for annexation and smart development in communities faced with rapid urbanization and growth.

Development in Other Communities

Development Davidson, NC⁸

Davidson, NC used a combination of smart-growth and new urbanist principles to preserve its small-town character while addressing development pressure from Charlotte's rapid growth. Davidson revitalized existing buildings while incorporating a variety of housing types in new neighborhoods to include affordable housing and parks within walking distance.

Davidson has fought to resist the development pressure from Charlotte, but that resistance quickly earned the town the reputation as being anti-growth and anti-business. Residents view the town differently and value the historic buildings and public open and green spaces. While the town has been slow to develop compared to surrounding areas, it is because they value their culture of public input and due to this deliberate approach to development the town was able to work with a developer to create a urbanist development which hosts a combination of residential and commercial spaces, the site emphasizes walkability and the small-town character of Davidson.

As the pressure to develop increased and their population began to grow, residents and officials in Davidson knew they needed to create a plan to accommodate growth in a way that preserved the small-town feel that the residents valued. In addition to population growth, the main growth sector was residential which placed a significant burden on public services. The significant cost for public services illustrated Davidson's need to diversify its economy.

Davidson relied on a smart growth approach which emphasizes economic diversification with managed growth. The town initially created a land plan in which eight principles of smart growth were emphasized:

⁶ "Voluntary Annexation."

⁷ Keyes, "STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR CITY ANNEXATIONS IN CALIFORNIA."

⁸ "Homegrown Tools."

1. Preserve the small-town feel of Davidson
2. Preserve and enhance Davidson's historic downtown
3. Ensure sustainable growth
4. Preserve significant amounts of open space
5. Re-establish the town's historic diversity of people
6. Develop at the same rate as the town can provide public facilities
7. Emphasize the importance of private property rights and the health of the community
8. Ensure that architecture and planning enhance the quality of life.

Eventually, this plan transformed into a several hundred-page zoning document which has tight restrictions, but still allows for some growth and development that will fit the character of the town for years to come. Davidson also leveraged their location and proximity to Charlotte in order to have developers, instead of the local government, pay for new road and infrastructure improvements for new sites. The Davidson example also highlights how smart growth principles can be a valuable facet of economic development rather than a constraint. In this way, the residents of Davidson, not outside developers will decide the growth of their community.

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Development Farmville, NC⁹

The historic tobacco farming community of Farmville faced pressure to develop from nearby Greenville. The town preserved its small-town status and longevity by diversifying its economy, increasing organizational capacity, and marketing developing opportunities that align with the town's character.

The town of Farmville created the Farmville Development Partnership which brought together the Economic Development Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Partnership. By bringing these three organizations together the town was able to use space, staffing, and funding more efficiently. The town also focused on supporting local businesses and ensuring long-term livability by creating a diverse range of housing options.

Farmville used the rapid growth of the Greenville area to its advantage by developing a brand for the town and marketing livability. Through marketing efforts, promoting events, and developing according to the values of the town rather than developers, Farmville was able to preserve its small-town character all while diversifying its economy.

⁹ "Homegrown Tools."

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Historic Preservation Edenton, NC¹⁰

Edenton, NC created an economic development strategy rooted in preserving its historic assets. The town worked with Preservation North Carolina to preserve historic mill cottages. When the owner, a company called Unifi, of the mill and the mill village decided to sell the property the town and Preservation North Carolina contacted Unifi and asked if they would be willing to donate the property instead of selling it to a developer. Thanks to their efforts, the company agreed, and the town acquired the entire property. The town then sold individual mill houses for \$20,000 to \$30,000 with no improvements. Over the years, homeowners have worked with Preservation North Carolina and BB&T to receive loan options that incorporated updates and historic preservation in one understandable package.

By preserving these historic properties, Edenton attracted private investment and created a marketing strategy to attract more tourists. This example also suggests that historic properties have the potential to attract innovative entrepreneurs to the town. The town approached this strategy through a public-private partnership and created an economic development asset from a potential liability. The partnership reduced the investment risk to the town and created a sustainable vision for the mill which then attracted significant investment.

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Smart Development & Historic Preservation Hillsborough, NC¹¹

Hillsborough, NC created an economic development strategy that preserved its rich history while creating a vision for its future. In the early 1990s, the town created a Vision 2010 committee tasked with developing a comprehensive plan for the community. In 2000, the committee updated the plan's language to reflect the ongoing pressures the town faced from urban sprawl. This language was the first step in Hillsborough journey towards smart development.

¹⁰ "Homegrown Tools."

¹¹ "Homegrown Tools."

Hillsborough approached economic development with two main strategies. The first being heritage-based tourism. The town leveraged its historical assets to attract tourists and used the revenue from food and beverage tax to fund a long-term marketing strategy for historic Hillsborough. Community events and festivals continue to promote Hillsborough's assets while generating revenue.

The second strategy relied on the annexation and permit review processes to facilitate development that aligned with the community's values. Because residential development often results in a net loss for municipalities, Hillsborough used the Vision 2010 plan to create a strategic plan focused on maintaining a diverse tax base within the town. This plan outlined parameters for growth in Hillsborough and emphasized a town-county approach to the project which would be guided by a steering committee. In addition to the following were goals listed in this strategic plan:

1. Preserve and enhance the Hillsborough core
2. Preserve significant cultural and natural resources
3. Coordinate growth with water and sewer availability
4. Grow in a fiscally responsible way
5. Keep existing businesses healthy
6. Assure continuity in public service provision

The plan also heavily emphasized the importance of parks, cultural assets, and open spaces. The strategic plan provided recommendations for land use planning and zoning ordinances to help create and foster a diverse tax base. It also suggested using interlocal agreements to help manage development and through annexation and rezoning require developers to include commercial space, parks, and other facilities in all new residential developments in the town.

Hillsborough used their desirable location combined with annexation and rezoning review processes to shape development. This empowered local officials to negotiate with developers because they had a better understanding of their value and their market. They were able to shift responsibility to developers for providing infrastructure to their developments. Because the town insisted that new developments include commercial space, the town increased its nonresidential tax base by nearly \$30 million while remaining true to their community values.

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Equity and Inclusion

Initially, communities may express concern or hesitancy around creating mixed-income housing. Still, research suggests that affordable housing projects that provide opportunities for mixed-income housing have a positive impact on communities. Mixed-income housing initiatives include subsidized and unsubsidized housing and have four main goals:

- attract outside resources into a community
- increase social capital for the lowest socioeconomic group
- provide learning opportunities for members of all socioeconomic groups
- enhance accountability and recognition of concerns in the neighborhood

Mixed-income housing helps to attract external resources to the community and has positive effects for the residents, such as emotional well-being and increased comfort. The challenges most often faced by mixed-income housing are retaining the look and feel of a community while helping residents who may be displaced by a new housing development.¹²

Multifamily homes are one way that communities can increase income diversity while adhering to form-based code stipulations. Since the 2008 economic crisis, the construction of multifamily homes has returned to pre-crisis rates while construction of single-family homes has not rebounded as strongly. Young adults are primary drivers of multifamily home construction, but as the baby boom generation ages, they are likely to contribute to the demand for multifamily homes as well. The availability of services and amenities such as zoning that permits neighborhoods that mix multifamily housing, assisted living arrangements, urban amenities, and proximity to seniors' children and grandchildren all factor into the decision of where and when to downsize.¹³

Community Engagement & Strategies to Address Diversity within a Community Pelican Rapids, MN¹⁴

Though a small town with a population of 2,300, Pelican Rapids is considered one of the most culturally diverse communities in Minnesota. The town built capacity and fostered entrepreneurship by creating a network of services for the immigrant communities and the native residents. A newly created multicultural committee partnered with the schools to help students learn about different cultures. The committee and the local library increase programming for immigrants like ESL classes and also increased programming for long-term residents. In addition to these efforts, the committee hosted a series of public forums so that residents could talk through their concerns about the changing demographics of the town. Based on these conversations, the library published a weekly article in the local paper highlighting different cultures and addressing different issues in each article. As the residents began to learn more about each other they become more comfortable with the diversity in Pelican Rapids. The formation of a local soccer league further helped to bring together residents from different backgrounds and cultures.

¹² Levy, McDade, and Bertumen, "Effects from Living in Mixed-Income Communities for Low-Income Families."

¹³ Rappaport, "Crowdedness, Centralized Employment, and Multifamily Home Construction."

¹⁴ "Homegrown Tools."



Pelican Rapids partnered with local institutions like the library, schools, and religious organizations to build capacity to provide enough services for the rapidly growing immigrant community. These partnerships, and the formation of the multicultural committee, helped the town provide services and involve the immigrant communities without becoming overwhelmed. Because of the town's dedicated efforts to bring together residents and immigrants, the immigrant communities started to grow and start their own businesses which increase the tax base, create jobs, and enhance the civic and economic fabric of the town.

This example not only highlights how diversity can be a source of strength for and increase economic impact, it also highlights the importance of partnering with local institutions and remaining dedicated to community engagement. The Pelican Rapids example also highlights the necessity of creating opportunities for the community to gather socially in order to develop a closer community and create a shared identity.

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Mission-Oriented Development Durham, NC¹⁵

In Durham, gentrification and a lack of affordable housing threatened to overwhelm the West End and Lakewood Tuscaloosa neighborhoods where investment lagged. The challenge these neighborhoods faced was how to increase investment while maintaining affordability and maintaining the assets that served these neighborhoods.

Self-Help is a community development financial institution (CDFI) that provides many services to increase economic opportunities for underserved populations across North Carolina. Regarding commercial development, Self-Help pursues projects that will aid non-profits, small businesses, and other tenants, who are also committed to assisting underserved populations in the areas, by providing access to affordable space.

In the West End neighborhood, residents reached out to Self-Help to redevelop the Kent Corner area. Self-Help began by acquiring properties and talking with tenants about their needs and potential uses for the property. Completed in 2015, the project resulted in a co-op grocery store and nearly 40,000 sf. of commercial space which is currently leased by the Center for Child and Family Health and other Duke University affiliated tenants. Self-Help seeks to foster meaningful relationships with residents and often follows an "invitation only" policy to acquiring and developing land. Self-Help was also involved in the redevelopment of the Lakewood Shopping Center, an initiative led by the Scrap Exchange which is a non-profit centered around creative reuse of materials.

¹⁵ "Homegrown Tools."



Both projects demonstrate that commercial real estate development can be financially sustainable and have a social impact. Both projects relied on strong partnerships and focus on community interests to foster economic activity, create jobs, provide services and spaces for community members to gather and socialize.

This example highlights the benefits of non-traditional and mission-driven development in communities. Non-profits and other community-oriented organizations can contribute to economic development and the growth of the community without taking away from the character of the community. Both projects were successful because they were based on community needs while still focusing on financial sustainability. The Kent Corner project relied on a combination of office and retail space to increase financial sustainability and the Scrap Exchange project combined retail and real estate to achieve financial sustainability.

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Mixed Ages Can Bring Economic Diversity Brevard, NC¹⁶

In the early 2000s, Brevard experienced an increase in retirees moving to the area, over 60% of new residents were retired. But in 2002, the closures of several plants resulted in over 2,000 jobs lost. With a number of retirees on the board of the local economic development commission, they suggested that they create a network of retirees to help businesses thrive and expand. This Retiree Resource Network includes nearly 70 retired businesspeople who provide free consulting and advising services to local business owners in Brevard and Transylvania County.

The Retiree Resource Network provides direct and customized consulting services to local entrepreneurs. With their years of experience, these retired businesspeople can provide tailored advice to suit the diverse needs of entrepreneurs and their businesses in order to expand and create more jobs. This example illustrates the value and expertise that retirees can bring to the local economic and social fabric of a community.

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¹⁶ "Homegrown Tools."



Community Engagement and Economic Development Ord, NE¹⁷

In Ord, NE, population decline and an overdependence on the farm economy created a tenuous economic situation for the town. The town used a four-pronged approach to economic development that emphasized youth outreach, leadership development, philanthropy, and entrepreneurship. The first step in the strategy was for the city, the county, and the Chamber of Commerce to commit to work together to share the costs and resources associated with community and economic development. The second step was that citizens passed a 1 cent local-option sales tax for economic development. With these capacity building resources; the city was then able to create a holistic approach to economic development that relied heavily on community engagement.

First, Ord created programs for school children to expose them to entrepreneurship and starting a business from start to finish. Then, they created a nine-month long leadership program to help participants learn to navigate interpersonal conflict and develop management skills. The town also engaged residents in philanthropic efforts. One initiative created an endowment and a “founders club,” members of which donate a minimum of \$1,000, revenue from this endowment is used to fund community and economic development programs. Finally, the city created a community resource team comprised of professionals such as attorneys, accountants, and lenders who offer their services free to entrepreneurs and small business owners.

The Ord case study highlights the importance that organizational capacity and financial resources have when addressing community and economic development. The city’s Chamber of Commerce prioritized monitoring outcomes and collecting data to measure the economic, civic, and social impacts of their programs. This data can also be used to attract additional investment and buy-in to build local support. A key factor in Ord’s success was communication. Staff members of the economic development department spent an increasing amount of time writing newsletters and articles, sending emails to residents, and appearing on radio shows in order to disseminate accurate information about the goals of the organization and its accomplishments. This positive flow of information helped them to connect with residents and generate buy-in. Finally, the culture of philanthropy that the city generated allowed them to create a system in which aging residents can bequeath assets to local causes which will benefit the town for decades to come.

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¹⁷ “Homegrown Tools.”



Resources

Name	Contact	Additional Information
Professional Organizations		
Urban Land Institute	https://uli.org/	
American Institute of Architects	https://www.aia.org/	
American Society of Landscape Architects	https://www.asla.org/	
American Planning Association	https://www.planning.org/	
American Institute of Certified Planners	https://www.planning.org/aicp/	
American Society of Civil Engineers	https://www.asce.org/	
American Council of Engineering Companies of North Carolina	https://www.acecnc.org/	

Name	Contact	Additional Information
Non-Profit, State, and University Organizations		
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office	http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/	
League of Historic American Theatres	www.lhat.org	
UNCG Center for Community-Engaged Design	https://iarc.uncg.edu/cc-ed/nc-main-street/	
Project for Public Spaces	https://www.pps.org/	A non-profit organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build strong communities. They have extensive web resources as well as examples of successful placemaking projects that can serve as inspiration.
Development Finance Initiative	https://dfi.sog.unc.edu/	DFI partners with local governments to attract private investment for transformative projects by providing specialized finance and development expertise. They are a good organization to engage in transforming sites



		that are owned by the city. They charge a fee for service and offer pro-bono assistance through classes.
NC State University College of Design	Meg Calkins, FASLA mecalkin@ncsu.edu , 919-515-8342	Professor and Head of the Department of Landscape Architecture
UNCC College of Arts & Architecture	Deborah Ryan, ASLA deryan@uncc.edu , 704-687-0123	Professor of Architecture and Urban Design, Director of the Master of Urban Design Program

Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Potential Funding Sources		
Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grants	https://www.ncparks.gov/more-about-us/parks-recreation-trust-fund/parks-and-recreation-trust-fund	-Funding Cycle: Applications due in May, granted in August -Award Amount: Maximum \$500,000, the applicant must match 50% of the total cost of the project -Project Types Funded: Local governments can apply to acquire land for parks and build recreational facilities for use by the public.
Resourceful Communities	https://www.conservationfund.org/our-work/resourceful-communities/our-approach	Creating New Economies Fund (CNEF) provides small grants for innovative triple bottom line projects. Grants average \$8,000-\$12,000, with a maximum award of \$15,000. Funding has supported a variety of projects, including: eco-tourism, sustainable agriculture, youth leadership development, alternative energy, and more.
EPA Grants for Recreation Economy for Rural Communities	https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities	Assistance program to help rural communities revitalize Main Streets through outdoor recreation
American Trails Resource Directory	https://www.americantrails.org/resource-library/directory	Information and resources on all aspects of trail development, education, and outreach
Rural Development Assistance Grant	https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services	Program assistance is provided in many ways, including direct or guaranteed loans, grants,



		technical assistance, research, and educational materials.
Department of Transportation (DoT) Planning Grant Initiative	https://connect.ncdot.gov/municipalities/PlanningGrants/Pages/Planning-Grant-Initiative.aspx	Funding Cycle: Call for Proposals in August; Deadline in November; Decisions in February Project Types: Annual matching grant program to encourage municipalities to develop comprehensive bicycle plans and pedestrian plans.
Transportation Alternatives (TA) Funds	https://trade.railstotrails.org/index ; State DoT TA Coordinator, Johanna I. Cockburn (919) 707-2601; jcockburn@ncdot.gov	Federal government funds for projects that expand travel choice, strengthen the local economy, improve the quality of life, and protect the environment. Eligible projects include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safe routes for non-drivers, and historic preservation.

Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Community Projects		
Z. Smith Reynolds (ZSR) Community Progress Fund	https://www.zsr.org/community-progress	- Funding Cycle: Letters of Intent accepted starting Oct. 1; Selected proposals receive an invitation to submit a full application in February; Grant decisions made in May - Award Amount: \$20,000 - \$30,000 per year for one or two years -Project Types: Short-term funding for projects with community momentum; primarily for organizations serving people of color that are in areas of NC with limited philanthropic resources
Historic Preservation Fund Grants	https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/index.html	Provides information on competitive grants related to historic preservation

Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Economic Development		



NC Department of Commerce – Downtown Development and Site Development funds – Main Street Solutions Fund	https://www.nccommerce.com/grants-incentives/downtown-development-funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Funding Cycle: Announced in May -Award Amount: Up to \$200,000 -Project Types: Economic development planning assistance to designated micropolitans in Tier 2 and 3 counties to activate North Carolina Main Street communities; retaining and creating jobs in association with small business
Main Street Solutions Fund	Dan Becker, Main Street Grants Administrator, dan.becker@nccommerce.com , 919-814-4668	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Economic development planning assistance available for Main Street Communities and micropolitans located in Tier 2 and 3 counties -Funding Cycle: Announced in May -Program goals are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide direct financial benefits to small businesses. Spur local investment in association with small business. Retain and create jobs in association with small business. -Awards up to \$200,000 to local government
Economic Development Assistance Program	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=306735	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Funding Cycle: Ongoing -Not eligible for non-profits with a 501 (c)(3) status -Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A feasibility study establishing the presence of a critical mass of support factors, entrepreneurial demand for use, and community support for the facility; A Pro-forma demonstrating financial capacity to operate the facility and reach a positive cash flow within a reasonable period; and



		<p>A management plan for the operation of the facility that at a minimum address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tenant selection policy; -Tenant lease agreement terms; -Business assistance policy (identify sources of assistance); -Tenant records review policy; -Tenant graduation policy; and -Management oversight of incubator operations.
Bank of America Community Reinvestment Grant	https://about.bankofamerica.com/en-us/global-impact/charitable-foundation-funding.html#fbid=rITIB8jBKxj	<p>-Provides grants related to the needs of individuals and families and grants related to the needs of the community by addressing economic development and social progress</p> <p>-Applications accepted 6/1/2020-6/26/2020</p>
NCGrowth's Incubator Guide	<p>Jess Wilkinson, Economic Development Manager</p> <p>Jessica_Wilkinson@kenan-flagler.unc.edu</p> <p>919-843-3282</p>	<p>NCGrowth is developing a comprehensive incubator guide to help communities determine the feasibility of business incubators in their communities. This guide provides case studies, resources, and examples of alternatives to incubators.</p>

Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Real Estate Development		
North Carolina Department of Commerce Building Reuse Program	https://www.nccommerce.com/grants-incentives/building-or-site-funds/building-reuse Hazel Edmond, Building Reuse Program, 919-814-4659, hazel.edmond@nccommerce.com	Available for renovating vacant buildings or renovating and expanding buildings occupied by companies operating in NC for at least the last 12 months
Economic Development Partnerships of NC	https://edpnc.com/	

