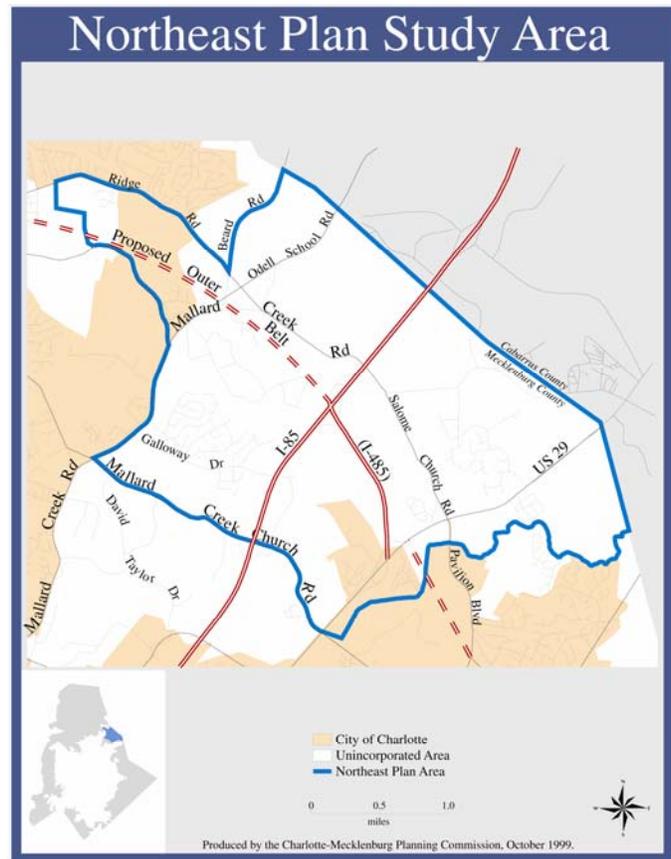


# Northeast Area Plan Volume 1: Concept Plan

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission



Adopted by the  
Charlotte City Council  
June 12, 2000  
Mecklenburg Board of County  
Commissioners  
March 7, 2000

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## Executive Summary

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### BACKGROUND

Because of significant increases in growth and development within both Mecklenburg and Cabarrus counties, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission directed Planning staff in May 1999 to begin a study of the area located between U.S. 29 and the proposed Mallard Creek/I-485 interchange. This area plan has been developed in response to this directive, and, if passed by the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners, it will amend the adopted 1996 Northeast District Plan for this part of the County. Although the plan addresses a number of issues affecting the study area, it is primarily centered around the following issue areas:

- Land Use/Zoning/Urban Design
- Transportation/Mobility
- Parks/Open Space
- Environmental Quality

The purposes of the Northeast Area Plan are to provide a framework for future growth and development and to serve as a guide for elected officials in making land use and zoning decisions. The Plan also seeks to ensure that the transformation of this area from a primarily rural setting to a more urban community happens in an orderly manner. It encourages future development that is sensitive to existing neighborhoods and business owners, supportive of transit and respectful of the environment.

The study area consists of approximately 5,312 acres and is located in the northeast portion of Mecklenburg County, with a small portion also located within the Charlotte City Limits. The boundaries are defined as the Cabarrus County line to the north, just past U.S. 29 to the east, Mallard Creek Church Road to the south and Mallard Creek Road and portions of Ridge, Johnston-Oehler and Odell School Road to the west. These boundaries are illustrated by the Northeast Area Plan Boundaries map (Map #2).

The plan is divided into two volumes; *Volume 1: The Concept Plan and Volume 2: The Implementation Plan*. Volume 1 describes the planning area, identifies issues and opportunities for the area and outlines a preferred vision. *Volume 2: The Implementation Plan*, includes strategies to implement the recommendations in the *Concept Plan*. The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners adopted Volume 1 on March 7, 2000. City Council adopted Volume 1 on June 12, 2000. Volume 2 will serve as a guide for staff in implementing the Concept Plan.

## PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This plan was developed by an inter-jurisdictional staff team consisting of representatives from Mecklenburg County Engineering, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department (CMUD), Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT), Cabarrus County Planning Department and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission. Comments received from property owners and other interested persons at public meetings were considered in the plan's development. Three meetings were held in the community for public comment and input on the plan. All three were held at the Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church. Approximately 75-100 people attended each meeting, including Planning Commission staff and elected officials.

The purpose of the first meeting was to introduce the planning process and identify opportunities within the study area. Staff presented information on the purpose and scope of the plan and described the planning process. Roadway projects in northeast Mecklenburg County were discussed in detail. Residents and property owners participated in an issue identification process to provide staff with a sense of some of the issues that needed to be addressed by the plan.

The purpose of the second meeting was to present the plan's issues and goals and to review draft recommendations. Staff reviewed proposed land use and transportation recommendations in detail. A number of questions and comments were received from the public, primarily concerning the purpose of the plan as well as transportation improvements and rezonings in the area.

The purpose of the third public meeting was to review and address in some detail the most frequently asked questions from the first two meetings and to present final recommendations. The questions and comments at this meeting centered around rezoning petition #99-57c. This petition proposes an integrated, mixed use development that includes a residential component at eight dwelling units to the acre (DUA) and a seven acre retail and office component.

The Planning Commission reviewed the plan and invited the public to speak at their December 14, 1999 meeting. The Planning Commission approved the plan at their January 18, 2000 meeting.

The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing on the plan at their February 1, 2000 meeting and approved the plan, with two amendments, at their March 7, 2000 meeting. Because these

amendments are within the City's jurisdiction, the proposed land use map that was adopted by the City is included in this document.

The Charlotte City Council held a public hearing on the plan at their April 10, 2000 meeting. Council's Economic Development and Planning Committee voted to recommend approval of the plan at their May 23, 2000 meeting and City Council approved the plan at their June 12, 2000 meeting.

### OPPORTUNITIES AND ISSUES

To develop a vision for the future of the Northeast study area and to propose strategies to achieve that vision the area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were considered.

The following strengths and opportunities were identified by citizens during the planning process:

- *Character of the area* – the study area is characterized by rolling hills, heavily wooded areas, ponds, creeks, a variety of wildlife and farmlands that define its rural quality.
- *Convenience* – the area's proximity to I-85, I-77, I-485 and the Highway 29/49 Corridor makes it highly accessible to and from a variety of locations. In addition, its proximity to UNCC, the Research Park and University Place make it convenient to employment and retail centers.
- *Strong neighborhoods* – the study area includes a number of established and developing neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. A number of neighborhood organizations and coalitions are active within the area.
- *Economic vitality* – The area is growing rapidly, and there continues to be a great deal of interest in it. Within the boundaries of the study area, over 37 rezoning petitions have been approved between 1996 and 1999 and three are currently pending. In addition, the area is near several employment centers.
- *Large amount of vacant land* – the large amount of undeveloped land in the study area (47.62 percent at the end of 1999) affords the opportunity for planned and coordinated growth with an emphasis on pedestrian/transit oriented development.
- *Transit opportunities* – the southern edge of the study area is part of the University Transit Corridor as defined by the 2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan. The 2025 Plan identifies this corridor as a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor. An Alternatives Analysis for the corridor is proposed to begin in early 2000. This analysis is a 12-18 month study to identify a preferred transit mode (bus, rail, or some

combination) and alignment plus gather more detailed land use information.

The following issues were identified by citizens as weaknesses and threats during the planning process:

- *Land use/zoning* – Citizens in the area expressed concern about the intense pace of growth and development within the study area over the past 2 ½ years.
- *Transportation /Mobility* – The current level of traffic congestion within the study area continues to be a primary concern of area residents.
- *Parks and Recreation* – While the Mallard Creek Recreation Center and Mallard Creek Park serve the study area; residents think the area lacks adequate park space within the study area.
- *Environment* – Residents want development in the area to take into consideration the need to protect the current environmental quality. They expressed concern that increased development would compromise water and air quality through increased traffic congestion and flooding.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The vision for this area is to create an economically viable and livable community with a balanced mixture of land uses – residential, civic, office, retail, parks and open space – that provides a well planned, transit-friendly and pedestrian-oriented environment for those that live, work and play in the area.

The vision will be achieved through the development of

- A land use pattern that is sensitive to existing development,
- Encouraging integrated land uses that can be served by transit,
- Encouraging the development of a variety of transportation choices, and
- Preserving portions of the natural landscape as part of a meaningful open space network.

### **DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT**

In the past 40-50 years, suburban land use development patterns have generally taken the form of large lot, decentralized, single-use districts,

connected by a maze of roadways. Concerns about rapidly disappearing undeveloped land and congested roadways prompted many communities to rethink this type of land development pattern and create new visions for their future. A majority of the development that has occurred in the Northeast has been in this 'suburban-style.' This plan focuses on reversing this trend and redefining and developing new patterns of development that encourage active, safe, pedestrian-oriented and well integrated land uses.

The goal of this concept plan is to ensure that future development provides for continued economic vitality, environmental integrity and pedestrian oriented design. The concept includes a connected street and open space network that encourages walking and bicycling.

### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The plan recommendations are divided into four areas:

- Land Use/ Zoning/Urban Design
- Transportation/Mobility
- Parks and Recreation
- Environmental Quality

Recommendations in each of these four categories are discussed below.

#### **Land Use**

##### *General*

The 1996 Northeast District Plan recommends a variety of land uses in this area with a majority of it recommended for research uses. However, recent changes in development patterns indicate the future will bring something else. Increased development pressures, traffic concerns, the lack of alternative transportation modes, the completion of the *2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan* and the *I-485 Interchange Analysis* have made the re-examination of the proposed and developing land use pattern a necessity.

In general, this Northeast Area Plan recommends that the research land uses shown on the 1996 Northeast District Plan be changed to allow for a mixture of uses including single family residential, multi-family residential, office and retail. Research uses are included as part of a mixture of land uses south of Galloway Road. Increased residential densities and mixed uses are encouraged where they are compatible with the surrounding land uses and/or within close proximity of proposed transit stations. The changes result in the character of the northwest and southeast quadrants of the study area becoming predominantly

residential and the character of the northeast and southwest quadrants becoming a mixture of more compact residential and non-residential uses.

The *2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan* proposes a rapid transit system as a way to sustain economic growth while protecting the quality of life. Within the study area, stations are proposed at I-85 and Mallard Creek Church Road (Northwest Quadrant) and at U.S. 29 and Mallard Creek Church Road (Southwest Quadrant). Both I-85 and U.S. 29 are identified as part of the University Transit Corridor, and the corridor is recommended as a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line.

In general, the land use concept proposed in this plan is consistent with the 2025 Plan recommendations and calls for a mix of residential and non-residential land uses. More intense land uses are recommended adjacent to proposed transit stations. Proposed densities vary based on the type of station area proposed, land use, and the distance from the station. In general, the intensity of proposed use is greatest closest to the proposed transit facilities. Densities decrease the further away the locations are from the proposed transit stations.

The *I-485 Interchange Analysis* provides land use recommendations for the 34 interchanges proposed for the 67-mile freeway. Interchanges within the study area are U.S. 29 Southeast/Southwest Quadrant), I-85 North (center of all quadrants) and Mallard Creek Road (Northwest/Northeast Quadrant). The transportation recommendations for these interchanges include interchange design with an urban diamond, managing traffic movement around interchanges, realigning some roads, and amending the locally adopted Thoroughfare Plan.

This plan recommends multi-family residential north of the Mallard Creek Interchange and single family residential south of it. Residential and mixed residential/non-residential uses are proposed surrounding the I-85 North Interchange and multi-family residential, retail and industrial uses are proposed surrounding the U.S. 29 Interchange.

Areas not part of the transit corridors or located within the interchange areas are referred to as *wedges*. The land uses recommended for these wedge areas are predominantly low density residential uses.

### **General Urban Design Recommendations**

It is important to consider design issues in future growth and development. Careful attention should be given to access, open space, pedestrian access, and other aspects of urban form. The following urban

design guidelines should be applied to development within the study area. In general, future development should:

- Provide a mixture of land uses within developments and ensure that new development is sensitive to existing neighborhoods.
- Provide well designed, compatible, neighborhood-oriented, high density residential development where appropriate (i.e. transit service areas).
- Provide pedestrian-oriented/transit-oriented development where appropriate.
- Provide an interconnected street network with pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent developments.
- Provide usable open space within developments.

The following guidelines should be applied to development within the study area. Compliance with the guidelines will occur primarily through the rezoning process, with Planning Commission staff working with rezoning petitioners to develop plans consistent with the guidelines. For properties that do not require a rezoning, compliance with the guidelines, while strongly encouraged, is voluntary.

#### **Site/Building Design Guidelines Recommended for Residential Development up to 8 Dwelling Units per Acre**

- Orient front doors toward streets and sidewalks.
- Orient primary facades toward local and collector streets.
- Provide visual screening in residential areas adjacent to I-485.
- Retain and fully integrate existing historic structures and natural features.
- Recess garages from the front of the structure.
- Locate surface parking for multi-family and townhome units in the rear of the buildings.
- Avoid large expanses of parking.
- Provide quality hard and soft landscaping including tree plantings, squares, courtyards and greens. Use buildings to define edges and to provide a sense of enclosure.
- Position open spaces to take advantage of views into the site and to provide physical and visual links between various parts of the development.

#### **Transportation/Mobility**

The current level of transportation congestion within the study area continues to be a primary concern of area residents. Congestion along Mallard Creek Road and the condition of Galloway Road are specific areas of concern. The widening of Mallard Creek Road from I-485 to the Mecklenburg-Cabarrus county line and from Prosperity Church Road to I-

485 to four lanes and are listed as unfunded projects in the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) 2020 Transportation Plan.

Of the 34 interchanges proposed for I-485, three are within the study area's boundaries. Listed below are the general recommendations for all of the interchanges, followed by the specific recommendations for the three interchanges that are within the boundaries of the study area. These recommendations are the result of a thorough analysis that began in October 1998. The Northeast Area Plan supports both the general and interchange specific recommendations listed below. The plan also supports the eleven Transportation Improvement Projects (TIP) planned for the Northeast.

#### *Implement the General Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- Design interchange areas to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- Encourage internal connectivity between land uses/developments near interchanges.
- Include streetscape improvements as part of the design for each interchange.
- Locate any proposed service roads far enough away from I-485 so that land can be developed along both sides of the road.
- Ensure that any 'land-locked' property is provided access through the land subdivision process.
- Amend local subdivision ordinances to require developers to utilize natural land contours, or otherwise provide visual screening in residential areas along I-485 wherever the NCDOT is not proposing to construct noise walls.
- Provide adequate lighting at interchange areas. Lighting should not intrude into adjacent neighborhoods.

#### *Implement the U.S. 29/I-485 Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- For the short term, add a loop in the southwest quadrant. The interchange may need to be an urban diamond.
- Align Salome Church Road with Pavilion Boulevard at U.S. 29 and signalize intersection.
- Extend control of access along U.S. 29 from I-485 north to Pavilion Boulevard.

#### *Implement the I-85 North/I-485 Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- Reassess the operation of I-85 from I-485 to Speedway Boulevard/Concord Mills Boulevard in response to both recent

development in this area and to the proposed additional interchange.

- Encourage connectivity between land uses/developments.

*Implement the Mallard Creek Road/I-485 Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- Design interchange as an urban diamond.
- Request that the NCDOT facilitate a process to determine needed transportation improvements between the interchange and Concord Mills Mall and the surrounding development.
- Designate Odell School Road as a major thoroughfare on the Thoroughfare Plan.
- Fund the widening of Mallard Creek Road to four lanes from I-485 to Prosperity Church Road.

*Implement the Eleven Transportation Improvement Projects (TIP)*

*Currently Planned*

- Construct I-485 from I-85 to NC 49.
- Widen U.S. 29 to six lanes from Pavilion Boulevard to Rocky River in Cabarrus County.
- Construct a four lane divided facility with I-85 Interchange at “City Boulevard” from Neal Road to east of I-85.
- Construct a two lane facility on new four lane right-of-way at West Sugar Creek Road from south of W.T. Harris Boulevard to David Cox Road.
- Construct I-485 from NC 49 to NC 218.
- Widen Mallard Creek Church Road to a four lane median divided facility from U.S. 29 to NC 49.
- Widen Prosperity Church Road to a four lane facility from Mallard Creek Road to the proposed Hucks Road Extension.
- Widen Mallard Creek Road/Graham Street Extension to a four or five lane facility from University Boulevard to W.T. Harris Boulevard.
- Construct I-485 from U.S. 21 to I-85.
- Widen I-85 from U.S. 29/NC 49 to I-485 to six lanes.
- Widen I-85 from I-485 to NC 73 to eight lanes.

*Other road improvements that are recommended by this plan are to:*

- Widen Mallard Creek Road between Mallard Creek Church Road and Salome Church Road to four lanes; and,
- Improve and widen Galloway Road between Mallard Creek Road and I-85.

*Expand Transit/Rapid Transit in this Area*

- Expand the Concord Express transit service to serve this area.
- Complete the Transit Alternatives Analysis for the University Corridor.

*Implement the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Bicycle Transportation Plan*

- Construct paved shoulder on Mallard Creek Church Road from I-85 to North Tryon.

- Establish wider outside lanes on U.S. 29 from University City Boulevard to Pavilion Boulevard.

### **Parks and Open Space**

Parks and greenways are integral to livable and enjoyable communities. Parks function as neighborhood meeting places, active and passive recreation areas and picnic spots. While there are no existing parks within the study area, Mallard Creek Community Park and Mallard Creek Recreation Center are both just outside of the study area's boundaries. Mallard Creek Community Park, located on Johnston-Oehler Park, is a 515 acre park that includes ball fields. The park's first phase opened in 1994, and future plans include an 18-hole golf course, soccer and other ball fields, tennis courts, a playground, picnic area and trails.

A portion of the Mallard and Clarks Creek Greenway is located within the study area. The greenway includes 3.6 miles of existing trail with future phases planned from south of Mallard Creek Church Road and north along Highway 29 past the I-485 interchange.

This plan has the following recommendations for parks within the study area:

- Acquire 15 acres to expand Mallard Creek Community Park.
- Develop the 32 acre site across from Mallard Creek Community Park.
- Encourage large scale development to donate park land to the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department.
- Encourage the development of private open space within subdivisions to enhance the public park system.
- Expand the greenway system along Mallard Creek and Clarks Creek.

### **Environmental Quality**

The Northeast, like Mecklenburg County overall, generally has a healthy environment that contributes to making this a desirable and livable community. The following measures are recommended to maintain or improve the area's current environmental quality.

- Implement these land development measures: Surface Water Improvement Management (SWIM) program buffers, greenway dedication, stormwater management.
- Maintain conformity with USEPA Air Quality Standards.
- Pursue environmentally friendly alternative modes of transportation.

# **INTRODUCTION**

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## **BACKGROUND**

Charlotte-Mecklenburg is divided into seven geographic areas or districts – the North, Northeast (Map #1), East, South, Southwest, Northwest and Central Districts – for planning purposes. Each of these areas has a district plan that outlines broad policies and recommendations for the area and addresses a wide range of physical development issues.

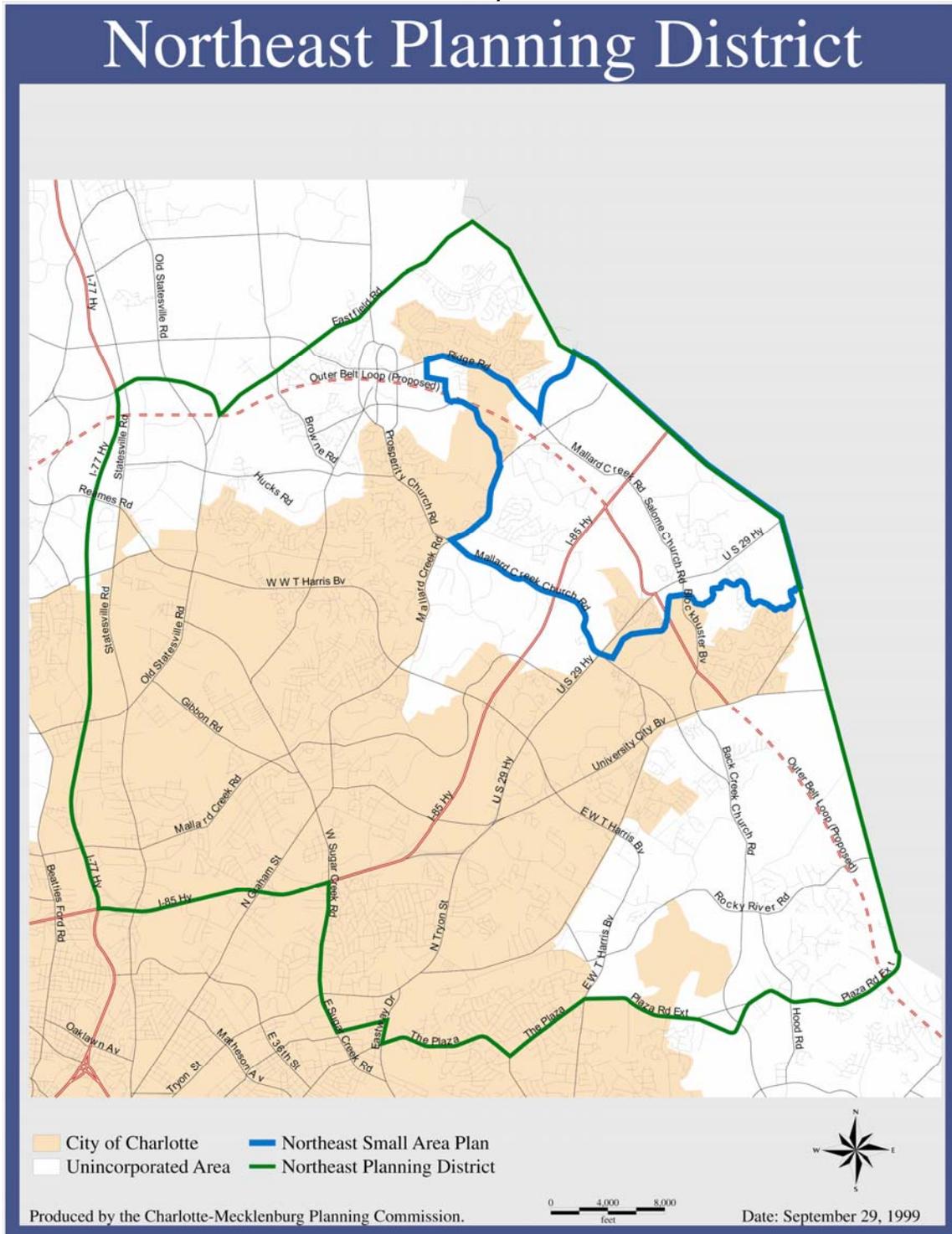
The Northeast District Plan was the first district plan to be adopted in 1987 and it became the first one to be revised, in 1996. It anticipated the district would become one of the fastest growing areas in Mecklenburg County. The plan is described as a “...blueprint for influencing positive change in the Northeast district (that) ...embraces a vision of the Northeast district as a unique and diverse community in the future.” The plan articulates the following goals:

- Continued job growth;
- Attractive and diverse neighborhoods;
- Well-planned retail/mixed-use centers;
- Enhanced mobility;
- Unique identity/sense of place;
- Accessible public open spaces.

In May 1999, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission directed staff to initiate a study of the area located between U.S. 29 and the proposed Mallard Creek/I-485 interchange due to significant increases in development both inside Mecklenburg and Cabarrus counties (Map #1). This plan is being developed in response to that directive and will amend the Northeast District Plan adopted in 1996. Although the plan addresses a number of issues affecting the study area, it is primarily focused on the following issue areas:

- Land Use/Zoning/Urban Design
- Transportation/Mobility
- Parks/Open Space
- Environmental Quality

Map 1: Northeast Planning District with the Area Plan Boundaries Identified



Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

## PLAN PURPOSE AND FORMAT

The purpose of the Northeast Area Plan is to provide a framework for future growth and development. This plan will serve as a guide for elected officials in making land use and zoning decisions. The plan also seeks to ensure that the transformation of this area from a primarily rural setting to a more urban community happens in an orderly manner. It encourages future development that is sensitive to existing neighborhoods and businesses, supportive of transit and respectful of the environment.

The plan is divided into two volumes. *Volume 1: The Concept Plan* describes the planning area, discusses issues and opportunities for the area and outlines a preferred vision for the study area. The area faces several unique challenges including the following:

- Growth pressures fueled by the development of Concord Mills Mall in Cabarrus County;
- The increased size and amount of activity at Lowes Motor Speedway;
- Construction of the Outerloop (I-485);
- Increasing multi-family development;
- Traffic congestion.

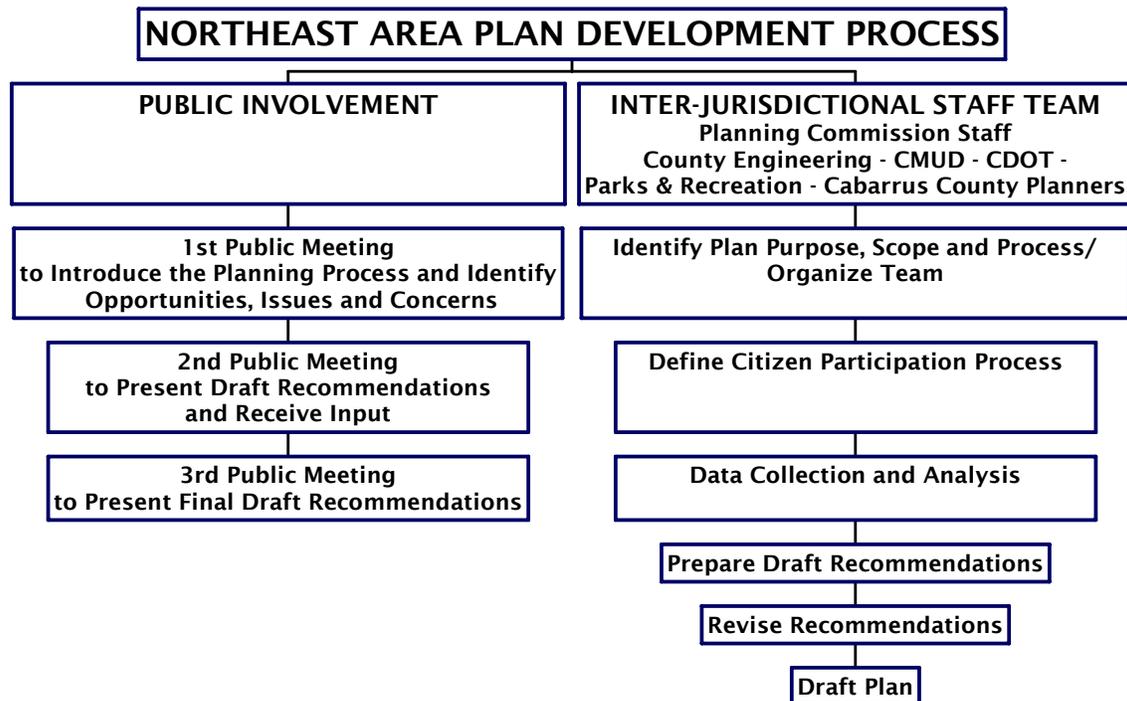
The goals of this plan are as follows:

- Encourage development sensitive to existing neighborhoods;
- Recognize and encourage compatible land uses across county lines;
- Improve the transportation network and provide transportation choices;
- Encourage integrated land uses that can be served by transit; and
- Encourage the provision of usable open space.

*Volume 2: The Implementation Plan*, identifies strategies to implement the recommendations in the *Concept Plan*. The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners and Charlotte City Council only adopted Volume 1. Volume 2 will serve as a guide for staff in implementing the Concept Plan.

## PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION PROCESS

An interdepartmental, inter-jurisdictional staff team lead by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission, with the consideration of comments received at three public meetings, has developed this document. The purpose of the first public meeting was to solicit public comment, which provided staff with a sense of some of the issues to be addressed by the plan. Draft recommendations were presented at two more public meetings. Planning Commission staff and elected officials attended each of the meetings.



The Planning Commission reviewed the plan and invited the public to speak at their December 14, 1999 meeting. The Planning Commission approved the plan at their January 18, 2000 meeting.

The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing on the plan at their February 1, 2000 meeting and approved the plan, with two amendments, at their March 7, 2000 meeting. Because these amendments are within the City's jurisdiction, the proposed land use map that was adopted by the City is included in this document.

The Charlotte City Council held a public hearing on the plan at their April 10, 2000 meeting. Council's Economic Development and Planning Committee voted to recommend approval of the plan at their May 23, 2000 meeting and City Council approved the plan at their June 12, 2000 meeting.

*Volume 1: The Concept Plan*, will be formally presented to the County Commission and City Council for adoption. *Volume 2: The Implementation Plan*, will not be presented for adoption but, rather will serve as a guide for staff in implementing the Concept Plan.

The following sections include an inventory of existing conditions in the study area including a neighborhood profile, land use/zoning, urban design, transportation, parks/greenways, the environment and opportunities and issues. The next sections describe a concept plan for addressing each of these areas and includes a vision statement, description of the development concept and recommendations.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE**

#### **Population**

Table #1 provides a socioeconomic profile of the area. This profile is based on 1990 Census data and does not include changes that have taken place in the area since then. As indicated, the study area is included in census tract 55.02.

The total population of the Census Tract 55.02 was 6,780 in 1990. A majority of the population is white; approximately 14% is black. More than 44% of the households earned more than \$50,000.

**Table 1**  
**Socioeconomic Profile for Census Tract 55.02**  
Source: 1990 U.S. Census

	<b>Census Tract 55.02</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Population</b>		
Total	6,780	
White	5,682	83.8
Black	934	13.8
Under 18	1,706	25.2
65+	471	6.9
<b>Households</b>		
Total	2,618	
One Person	622	23.75
Female Headed	158	.06
Married with Children	825	31.5
Female Headed with Children	71	2.7
<b>Education</b>		
Persons 25+	4,593	
High School Graduates	1,063	87.1
College Graduates	1,435	37.8
<b>Occupations</b>		
Adults in Labor Force	4806	
Unemployed	261	5.4

	Census Tract 55.02	%
<b>Income</b>		
Total Household	2,618	
\$0 - \$14,999	316	12.1
\$15,000 - \$24,999	307	11.7
\$25,000 - \$34,999	374	14.3
\$35,000 - \$49,999	464	17.7
\$50,000+	1,157	44.2
Families Below Poverty	52	1.9

### Physical Space

Most of the study area is vacant, with single family being the predominant land use. There are both older, established neighborhoods and newer ones. While many of the older neighborhoods contain larger lots with deep setbacks, many of the newer ones feature narrow lots with small setbacks. Older neighborhoods include Sir Anthony, Homewood Acres and the Galloway Road community. Newer neighborhoods include Robyns Glen (1995), Mallard Woods (1995) and Lexington (1995). There are also a number of homes on large parcels along Ridge, Beard and Johnson-Oehler Roads.

There are a number of established neighborhood organizations from the area registered with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission. Among these are the Galloway Road Community Organization, Homewood Acres, the Mallard Creek Community, the Northeast Coalition of Homeowners, Sir Anthony, Withrow Downs, Mallard Woods, Lexington and Robyns Glen.

The area's ambience is a dichotomy between older, rural and newer, suburban development. Typically, the development in the area has changed from rural residential to single (R-4) and multi-family (R-12) development with increased retail and office uses.

### LAND USE/ZONING

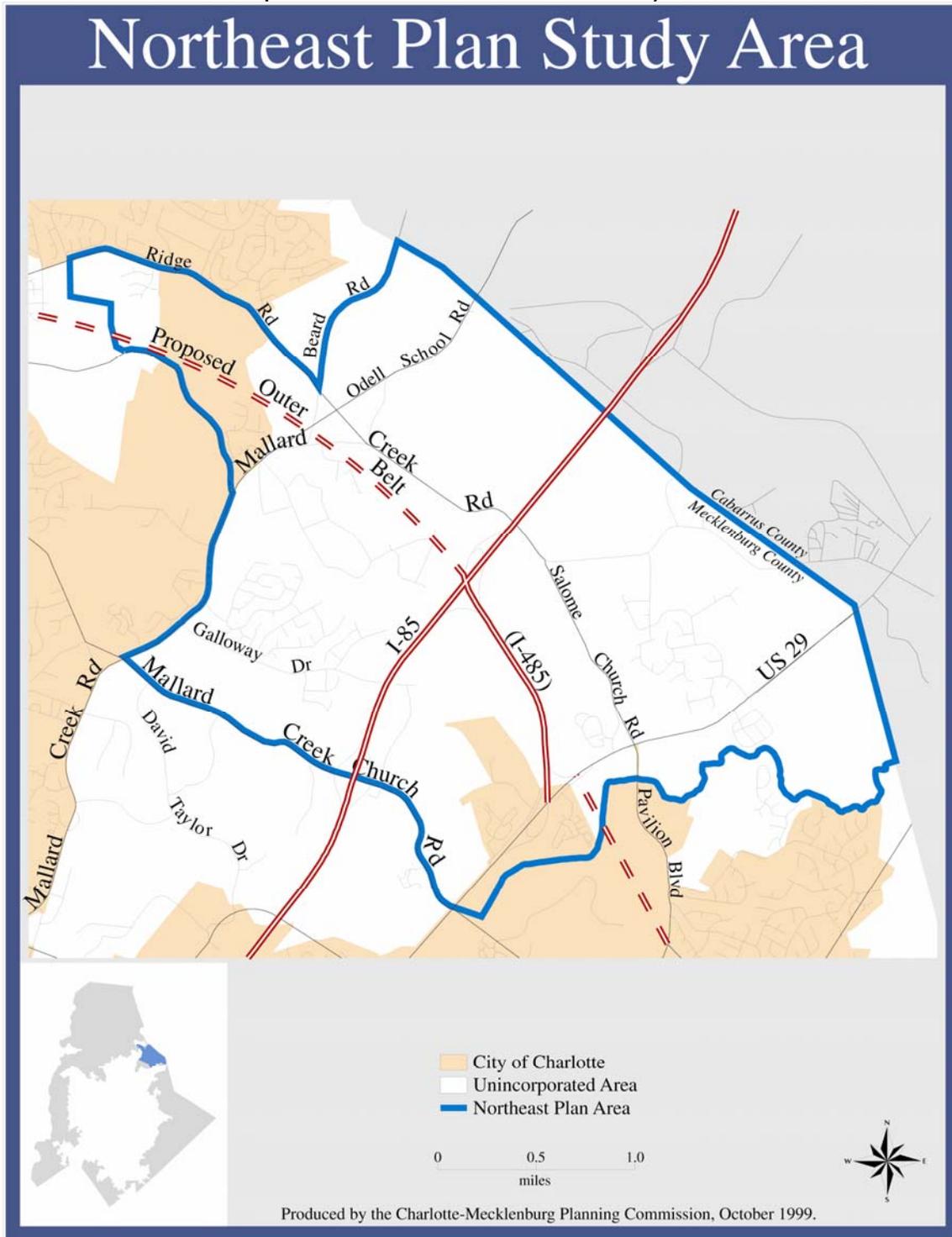
This section describes the land use and zoning characteristics of the study area and includes maps and tables to present this information.

The study area consists of approximately 5,312 acres and is located in the northeast portion of Mecklenburg County with a small portion located within the City of Charlotte. The plan boundaries are defined as the Cabarrus County line to the north, just past U.S. 29 to the east, Mallard

Creek Church Road to the south and Mallard Creek Road and portions of Ridge, Johnston-Oehler and Odell School Road to the west. These boundaries are illustrated on Map #2.

Approximately 1/2 of the study area will be affected by the City of Charlotte's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The ETJ allows the City to shape development within a mile-wide tract adjacent to the current city limits, an area the City will annex within the next few years. The ETJ gives Charlotte some control over this land before annexation occurs by allowing it to impose zoning and building standards. Some of these standards may be stricter than the County's.

Map 2: Northeast Area Plan Study Area



Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

A large portion of the study area is currently vacant or developed with large-lot single family homes (Map #3 and Table #2).

**Table 2**  
**1999 Northeast Study Area Existing Land Use**  
 Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission, July 1999

Existing Land Use	Acreage	% of Total
Vacant	2,530	47.62
Single Family	2,313	43.54
Industrial/Utilities	164	3.09
Institutional	138	2.59
Greenspace/parks	67	1.26
Multi-family	50	.95
Retail	50	.95
Totals	5,312	100.00

However, the area is being rapidly developed with single family subdivisions, multi-family developments, retail and office uses. Multi-family, institutional and retail uses are concentrated along Highway 29 and the southern portion of Mallard Creek Road. In the past 2 ½ years there have been more than forty rezoning petitions filed within the study area. Many of these petitions include multi-family, office and retail uses. The character of the study area will likely change quickly in the next few years as a result of continued development.

While there are a few older, established neighborhoods within the study area, many neighborhoods began developing in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Withrow Downs was constructed in the late 1980s and early phases of Mallard Woods and Lexington were developed in 1995. Currently, half of the study area is vacant and more than 40% is single family. Civic/institutional uses are located throughout the study area including Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church, established in 1824, and the new Hickory Grove Baptist Church campus located on Odell School Road. Large retail uses such as the Starlight Cinema and Blockbuster Pavilion are located on U.S. 29. Lowes Motor Speedway is located just across the county line on U.S. 29.

There is one designated Historic Property within the study area, the W.T. Alexander House located on an 18.5 acre site on the north side of West Mallard Creek Church Road. The house, designated in 1977, is one of the finest pre-civil war homes remaining in Mecklenburg County. Although surrounded by multi-family and retail development, it still retains some aspects of its rural ambience. There are also several other properties that

are considered to have historic designation potential: the Benjamin Garrison House on Johnson-Oehler Road (c.1860), the Oehler Log House on Jim Oehler Road (c.1820) and the Mallard Creek Church Cemetery on Mallard Creek Church Road (c.1860).

A majority of the study area (75%) is zoned for single family development (Map #4 and Table #3).

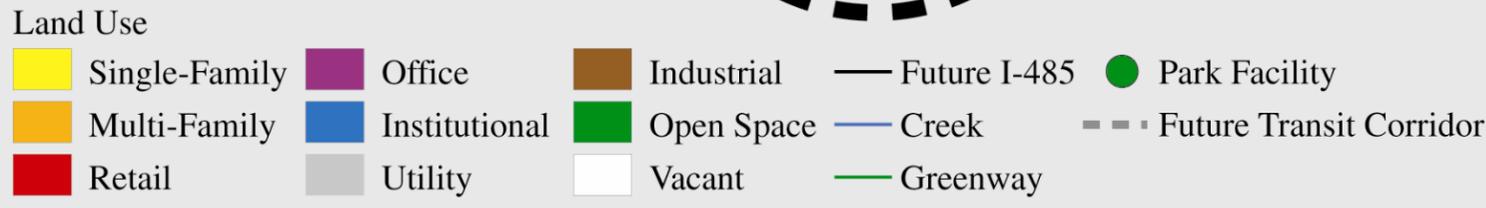
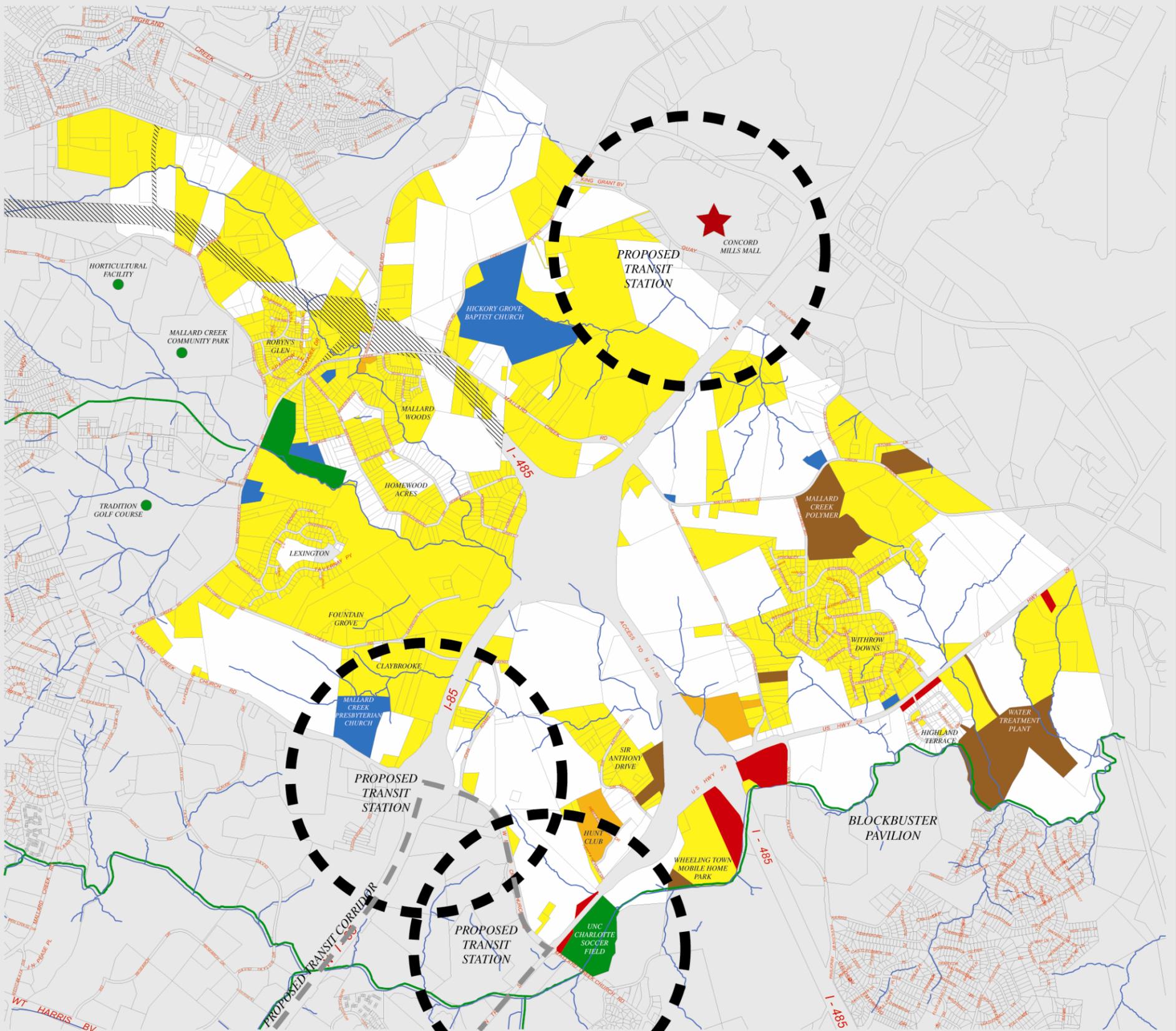
**Table 3**  
**1999 Northeast Study Area Existing Zoning**

Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission/Mecklenburg County Tax Office,  
July 1999

<b>Zoning Classification</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Retail	128.00	2.41
Office	38.00	.72
Institutional	131.98	2.50
Industrial/Utilities	51.10	.10
Research	193.50	3.64
Mixed Use	666.00	12.55
Single Family	3,929.00	74.88
Multi-Family	175.00	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,312.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Retail zoning classifications are concentrated along East Mallard Creek Church Road and Highway 29, near the Blockbuster Pavilion. The area surrounding the 29/I-485 interchange is zoned for multi-family, retail and office development.

# Northeast Small Area Plan Existing Land Use



Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission.

Date: September 8, 1999



## URBAN DESIGN

Up to now, portions of the area have developed in a typically suburban fashion with cul-de-sac subdivisions with relatively low intensities of four units per acre. Most of these subdivisions have one entrance and exit point. Other portions of the study area maintain a rural quality with narrow roads; rolling hills and dense woods and houses scattered on one acre (and larger) parcels.

The suburban strip development that characterizes the area tends to include large lot, decentralized single uses at low densities that are connected by a maze of roadways. Buildings are set far back from the street, walking access is limited and the site is designed to accommodate the auto. Many of the features of this type of development, such as wider roadways, numerous driveways, an overall lack of connectivity and limited walking access, have severe impacts on traffic. Auto-oriented uses also have aesthetic impacts on their surroundings with the increase in size and number of signs identifying businesses and a general disregard for the pedestrian.

More recent development has included a mix of low density residential, multi-family, office, retail and mixed-use development. The mixed-use development has typically consisted of a combination of single-family and multi-family with a retail and/or office component. Well-designed mixed uses can encourage land use patterns and relationships that can accommodate a variety of transportation options, decrease auto dependence and improve the overall quality of life.

## TRANSPORTATION

### **Roadways**

U.S. Highway 29, Mallard Creek Church Road and Mallard Creek Road are major thoroughfares within the study area. These roads carry a considerable amount of vehicular traffic (Table #4). In addition, I-77 and I-85 are freeways that run through the study area. I-485 will have three interchanges within or adjacent to the study area. These interchanges are planned to be completed by approximately 2010. The Mallard Creek Road interchange will involve the realignment of Mallard Creek Road and may alter the access to the Mallard Woods subdivision.

**Table 4**  
**Northeast Study Area 24-Hour Midblock Traffic Counts**

Source: Charlotte Department of Transportation

<b>Location</b>	<b>1997 Volume</b>	<b>1998 Volume</b>
Mallard Creek Road north of Mallard Creek Church Road	No counts available	4,400
Mallard Creek Church Road east of Mallard Creek Road	16,000	No counts available
Mallard Creek Church Road west of Highway 29	13,000	No counts available
Highway 29 north of Mallard Creek Church Road	22,000	No counts available
Highway 29 at the county line	19,000	No counts available

**Transit**

There is currently no local bus service to the study area. The UNCC area, just outside of the study area, is served by two local bus routes: UNCC/Southpark and UNCC/Uptown. Both routes have stops along East Mallard Creek Church Road. Plans are underway to expand the 29 Express bus service to serve Concord Mills.

Charlotte’s Five Year Transportation Plan (1997-2002) emphasizes the expansion of transit services as a means to lessen traffic congestion and provide alternatives to automobile travel. The Five Year Transportation Plan identifies five transit hubs. As part of this plan, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC), which oversees the development of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s rapid transit system, will contract for the development of a county-wide transit (bus) services plan that should be completed by fall 2000. In addition, the City of Concord is considering developing a transit services plan. This plan strongly recommends that local and express bus service be expanded to the study area with stops along Mallard Creek Church Road and extended to the proposed mixed-use Commercial Center at Odell School and Quay Roads.

Charlotte’s Five Year Transportation Plan (1997-2002) emphasizes the expansion of transit services as a means to lessen traffic congestion and provide alternatives for travel in the Charlotte area.

The 2025 Integrated Transit Land Use Plan identifies the Mallard Creek Church Road area as the potential nucleus of a residential transit-oriented center. Two large areas on either side of Mallard Creek Church Road are

identified as suitable for intensive mixed-use development with an emphasis on office development as the employment component of the mixed use development.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is proposed to serve the University Corridor in the 2025 Land Use Plan. BRT consists of buses operating in exclusive busways with on-line stations just like a rail system, or on roads with improvements to allow buses to bypass traffic congestion. BRT is usually cheaper to build and operate than rail transit when new right-of-way has to be created. It is particularly compatible with low-density suburban land uses.

The preferred route for this corridor follows I-85 and Mallard Creek Church Road. BRT routes were also considered along NC 49 and US 29. However, no alternatives are discussed beyond the Mallard Creek Church Road and US 29 intersection. Charlotte-Mecklenburg will conduct a more detailed rapid transit and land use study for the University and North Mecklenburg transit corridors that will begin in January 2000. The study area is within the University corridor and directly relates to the North Mecklenburg corridor.

### **Sidewalks/Pedestrian Facilities**

Sidewalks and pedestrian paths provide increased mobility for residents and others. Because of the rural nature of the study area, there is currently no sidewalk network. However, many of the newer neighborhoods, such as Mallard Woods and Withrow Downs, include sidewalks on one side of the street. In addition, a portion of Mallard Creek Road across from the Lexington subdivision has sidewalks.

Currently, the County's Subdivision Ordinance requires sidewalks on both sides of new or existing arterial streets and extensions on one side of collector streets in all nonresidential subdivisions. In residential subdivisions, sidewalks must be constructed on both sides of new or existing arterial streets. Future subdivisions may have to follow the City's Sidewalk Ordinance if the city chooses to exercise its Extra Territorial Jurisdiction and/or annexes the land. Its Subdivision Ordinance requires sidewalks on both sides of all new or existing Class III and IV streets, all Collectors, Local Residential and Local Limited Residential streets.

## **Bicycle Facilities**

In recent years, bicycling has become more popular as a means of transportation, in addition to being a recreational pastime. New development often encourages bike paths and many new roads include bike lanes. While portions of the study area are popular with cyclists, there are currently no facilities to accommodate bicycle travel. The *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Bicycle Transportation Plan*, completed in March 1999, is the first step in encouraging more bicycling for transportation in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area. The intent of the bikeway improvement plan is to provide bicycle-friendly streets that will accommodate both advanced and basic cyclists, and both short and long distance trips. Three portions of two roads in the study area, Mallard Creek Church Road and U.S. 29, are listed as Priority Bikeway Improvements in the plan. These improvements are discussed in detail in the later in this document.

## **PARKS/GREENWAYS**

While there are no existing parks within the study area, the Mallard Creek Community Park and Mallard Creek Recreation Center are both just outside of the study area. Mallard Creek Community Park is a 515 acre park that includes ball fields. The first phase of the park was opened in 1994. Plans for the park include an 18-hole golf course, soccer and other ball fields, tennis courts, a playground, picnic area and trails.

The Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department broke ground for the Mallard Creek Recreation Center in December of 1997, the first recreation center to be built since 1981. The center is a 20,000 square foot facility offering an indoor playground, fitness room, full-service gym, computer room, lounge area, catering kitchen, community police office and multi-purpose rooms.

An existing greenway is located along Clarks Creek and Mallard Creek that links the neighborhoods of Mallard Trace, Sweet Water, Radbourne, Harris Point and Mallard Ridge to one another. The NCDOT has constructed a section of boardwalk and wetland area as the mitigation project for the construction of I-485. Currently, the boardwalk extends into the wetland area, but in the future it will connect to the Mallard Creek Greenway.

Mallard and Clarks Creek Greenway begins at Mallard Creek Elementary School, outside of the study area. Currently, approximately 2.3 miles of trail follows Clarks Creek to Mallard Creek Road. University Research Park, also outside of the study area, has a 1.2 mile trail system starting at its property behind Countryside Montessori School at David Taylor Drive.

## ENVIRONMENT

The northeast, like Mecklenburg County, generally has a healthy environment that contributes to making this a desirable and livable community. Charlotte is in conformity with the current Air Quality Standards as of April 7, 1999. Our ability to demonstrate conformity under the new standard will be greatly dependent upon the emission budget that is developed for our area by the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)

Charlotte is currently classified as a maintenance area for the national ground-level ozone standard. A new 8-hour ozone standard is scheduled to go into effect in July 2000, and it is anticipated that the USEPA will designate the Charlotte area as non-attainment under this new standard. While the full effects of this designation may not be felt until 2003, the outcome of a pending lawsuit between the State of North Carolina and the USEPA could result in greater restrictions on coal-fired power plants and transportation pollution sources in the Charlotte region before then.

An ozone awareness program has been implemented throughout Mecklenburg County and the City, and the City's five year transportation plan is dedicating greater resources to providing for alternative transportation. Measures such as these are extremely important in rapidly developing areas such as this study area.

According to the *1998 State of the Environment* report prepared by the Mecklenburg County Department of Environmental Protection, Mecklenburg County is divided into eight water basins based on geography. The Northeast Area plan study area lies in the East Basin. Surface water quality in the East Basin is better than average compared to other basins in the county, rating third best of the six creek basins.

The Mallard Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, located near the county line along Mallard Creek, is the most significant source of pollution in the basin. Mallard Creek has the poorest water quality in the basin caused primarily to recent significant land development, which has elevated turbidity and fecal coliform levels. The large percentage of single-family residential development in the basin results in an increased discharge of lawn fertilizers in storm water runoff contributing to elevated nutrient levels.

Mecklenburg County is actively pursuing a program to improve surface water quality. Called Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM), its objective is to produce measurably cleaner surface waters and

to restore the usability of our streams. The program focuses on increasing public awareness and involvement in efforts to restore stream quality, promoting intergovernmental cooperation in addressing planning and development issues effecting water quality, measuring water quality conditions and identifying and addressing specific pollution problems through the development of water basin plans.

Mecklenburg County continues to generate municipal solid waste at a rate considerably higher than the national average and lacks adequate capacity and options to meet its future disposal needs. As the County overall, and the Northeast, in particular, continue to grow and develop, waste generation will continue to increase. Both government and private entities currently conduct recycling and waste reduction programs in an effort to meet waste reduction goals and to reduce the cost of doing business.

### **OPPORTUNITIES AND ISSUES**

In developing a future vision for the Northeast study area, and proposing strategies to achieve that vision the area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were considered. Citizens identified the following strengths and opportunities during the planning process:

- *Character of the area* – the study area is characterized by rolling hills, heavily wooded areas, ponds, creeks, a variety of wildlife and farmlands that contribute to its rural quality.
- *Convenience* – the area's proximity to I-85, I-77, I-485 and Highway 29/49 makes it accessible to and from a variety of locations. In addition, the study area's proximity to UNCC, the Research Park and University Place make it convenient to employment and retail centers.
- *Strong neighborhoods* – the study area includes both established and developing neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. A number of neighborhood organizations and coalitions are active within the study area.
- *Economic vitality* – The area is growing rapidly, and there continues to be a great deal of interest in the study area. Within the boundaries of the study area, over 37 rezoning petitions have been approved between 1996 and 1999 and three are currently pending. In addition, the area is near several employment centers.
- *Large amount of vacant land* – The large amount of undeveloped land in the study area – 47.62% - affords the opportunity for planned and coordinated development with an emphasis on pedestrian/transit oriented development.

- *Transit opportunities* - The southern edge of the study area is part of the University Transit Corridor as defined by the 2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan. The 2025 Plan identifies this corridor as a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor. An Alternatives Analysis for the corridor is proposed to begin in early 2000. This analysis is a general 12-18 month study that leads to the identification of a preferred transit mode (bus, rail, or some combination) and alignment as well as present more detailed land use information.

The following issues were identified by citizens as weaknesses and threats during the planning process:

- *Land use/zoning* - Citizens in the area expressed concern about the area's intense pace of growth and development over the past 2 ½ years.
- *Transportation /Mobility* - The current level of traffic congestion within the study area continues to be a primary concern of residents.
- *Parks and Recreation* - While the Mallard Creek Recreation Center and Mallard Creek Park serve the study area; residents think it lacks adequate park space within the study area.
- *Environment* - Citizens say development in this area must take into consideration the need to protect the current environmental quality. They are concerned that increased development could compromise water and air quality through increased traffic congestion and flooding.

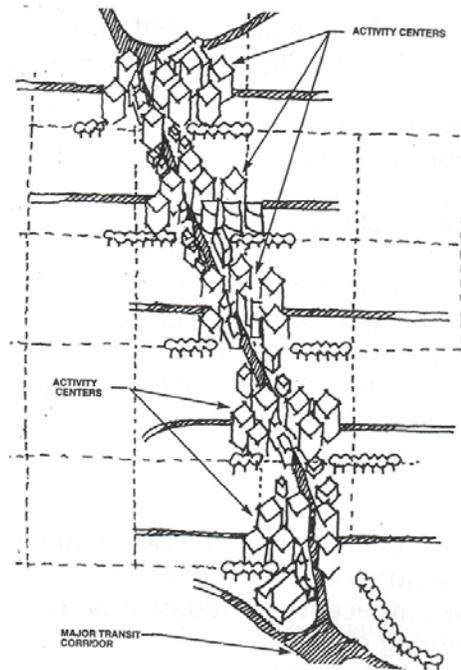
# CONCEPT PLAN

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## VISION STATEMENT

The vision for this area is to create an economically viable and livable community with a balanced mixture of land uses – residential, civic, office, retail, parks and open space – that provides a well planned, transit friendly and pedestrian oriented environment for those that live, work and play in the area. The vision will be achieved through the development of

- A land use pattern that is sensitive to existing development,
- Encouraging an integrated land use pattern that supports transit,
- Encouraging the development of a variety of transportation choices, and
- Preserving portions of the natural landscape as part of a meaningful open space network.



### **Figure # 1**

*Higher density uses should be located along major transit corridors with increased density at key areas that have particularly good transit access or intermodal transfer opportunities.*

Source: Planning for Transit-Friendly Land Use, 1994, NJ Transit

## DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

In the past 40-50 years, suburban land use development patterns have generally taken the form of large lot, decentralized, single-use districts, connected by a maze of roadways. Concerns about rapidly disappearing undeveloped land and congested roadways prompted many communities to rethink this type of land development pattern and create new visions for their future. A majority of the development that has occurred in the Northeast has been in this 'suburban-style.' This plan focuses on reversing this trend and redefining and developing new patterns of development that encourage active, safe, pedestrian-oriented and well integrated land uses.

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that future development provides for continued economic vitality, environmental integrity and pedestrian-oriented design. The concept includes a connected street and open space network that encourages walking and bicycling.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this plan are divided into the four issue areas that were identified at the beginning of this process:

- Land Use/ Zoning/Urban Design
- Transportation/Mobility
- Parks and Recreation
- Environmental Quality

Recommendations in each of these four categories are discussed below. The land use recommendations for the study area are shown on the Proposed Land Use Map (Map #5). Specific changes from the land use recommendations outlined in the Northeast District Plan are outlined in Table #5.

### **Land Use**

#### *General*

Although the 1996 Northeast District Plan recommends a variety of land uses in this area, the majority of the land is recommended for research uses. However, changes in recent development patterns indicate the future will bring something else.

Increased development pressures, traffic concerns, the lack of alternative transportation modes, the completion of the *2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan* and the *I-485 Interchange Analysis* have made the

re-examination of the proposed and developing land use pattern a necessity. Table #5 and Map #5 provide a summary of changes to the adopted land uses in the Northeast District Plan.

**Table 5**  
**1999 Northeast Area Plan Explanation of Land Use Changes**  
 Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

#	LAND USE RECOMMENDED BY NE DISTRICT PLAN	EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING LAND USE	CHANGE
1	Research	R-3	Residential	Residential (up to 4 DUA)
2	Research	R-3/ O-1(CD)	Vacant	Mixed Use - Office/Retail/Research (Retail not to exceed 75,000 square feet. Site plan must be integrated and the uses should relate architecturally.)
3	Research	RE-3(CD)	Vacant	Mixed Use - Residential (up to 8 DUA)/ Retail/Research
4	Research	RE-1/RE-3	Vacant	Mixed Use - Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet) /Office/Research (Must have an integrated site plan that addresses connectivity issues)
5	Research	B-1(CD)/ O-1(CD)	Vacant	Mixed Use - Office/Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet)
6	Research	R-3	Vacant	Mixed Use - Office/Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet) /Research
7	Research	R-3	Residential	Residential (12+ DUA)
8	Research	R-3	Residential/ Vacant	Residential up to 4 DUA (Density may be increased up to 12 DUA if 50% of the units are single family and the design guidelines are met.)
9	Research	R-12MF (CD)/ B-1(CD)	Vacant	Residential (12+ DUA)
10	Residential (4 DUA)	MX-2/ R-17MF (CD)	Vacant	Mixed Use - Residential (8 DUA), Institutional
11	Multi-family (12+ DUA)	R-3	Residential	Residential (up to 4 DUA)
12	Residential (up to 4 DUA)	R-3	Vacant	Residential (up to 8 DUA)

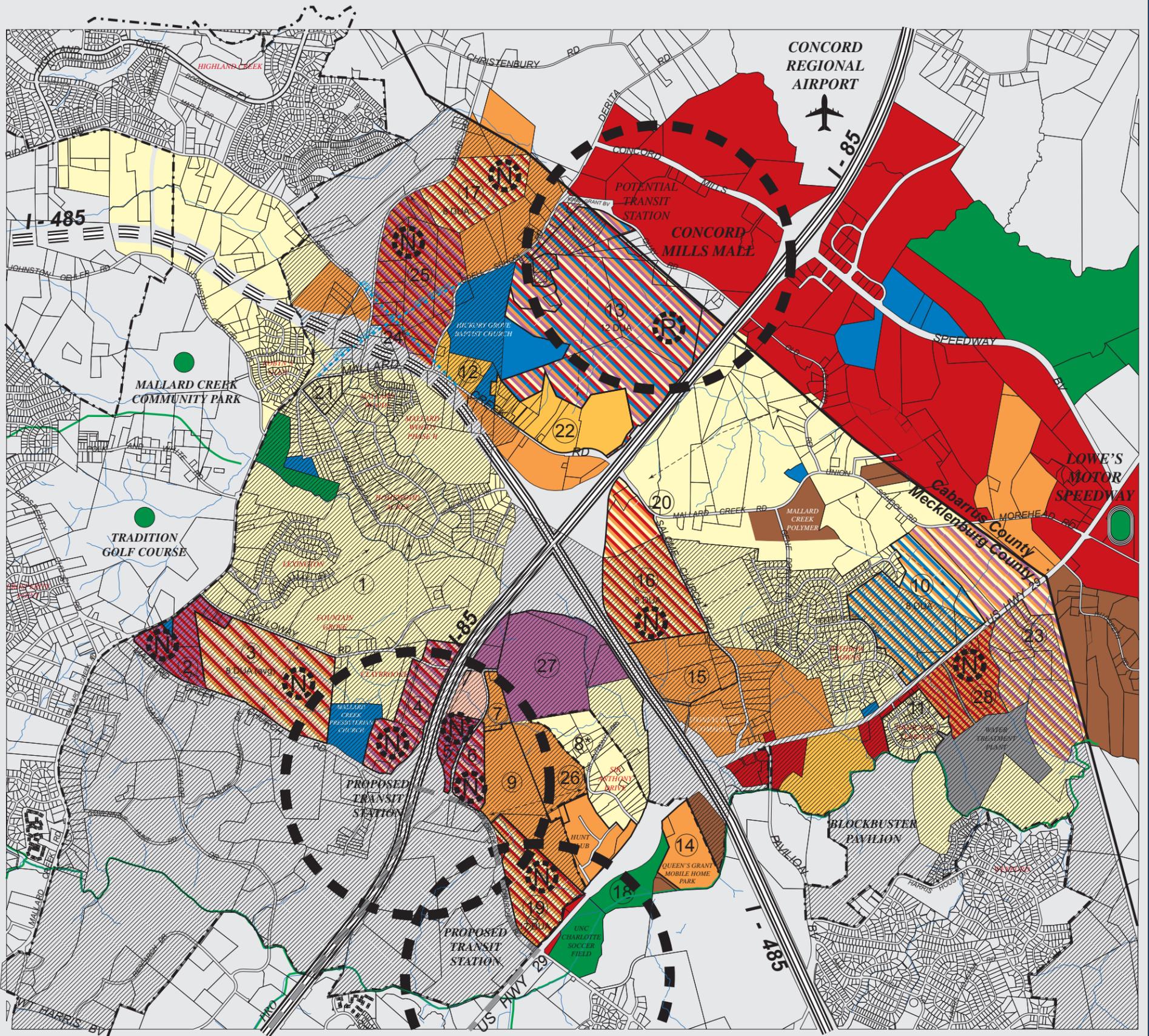
#	LAND USE RECOMMENDED BY NE DISTRICT PLAN	EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING LAND USE	CHANGE
13	Residential (variety of densities)	R-3	Vacant	Mixed Use - Residential (12+ DUA)/ Retail Office/Institutional
14	Residential (4 DUA)	R-MH	Mobile Home Park	Residential (12+ DUA)
15	Research	R-3	Vacant	Residential (12+ DUA)
16	Residential (4-8 DUA)	MX-2/CC	Vacant	Mixed Use - Residential (8 DUA)/ Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet)
17	Residential (4-8 DUA)	MX-2/CC	Vacant	Mixed Use - Residential (8 DUA)/ Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet)
18	Institutional	INST	Vacant	Greenspace/Park
19	Residential (12+DUA)/ Research	R-17/ O-1/ B-1/B-2	Residential	Mixed Use - Residential (17 DUA)/ Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet)
20	Neighborhood Center	R-12MF	Vacant	Residential (up to 4 DUA)
21	Residential (4-8 DUA)	R-3	Residential	Residential (up to 4 DUA)
22	Residential (up to 4 DUA)	R-3	Residential/ Vacant	Residential (up to 8 DUA north of Mallard Creek Road/12+ DUA south of Mallard Creek Road)
23	Residential (up to 4 DUA and 4-8 DUA)	R-3	Vacant	Mixed Use - Residential (4-12 DUA)/Office
24	Residential (up to 4 DUA)	R-3	Vacant/ Residential	Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet) /Office/Residential (12+ DUA) (Must include a residential component.)
25	Commercial Center	R-3	Vacant/ Residential	Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet) /Office/Residential (12+ DUA) (Must include a residential component.)
26	Research	R-3	Vacant	Residential (12+ DUA)
27	Research	R-3	Vacant	Office
28	Residential (up to 4 DUA)	R-3	Vacant	Mixed Use - Residential (12+ DUA)/Retail (Retail not to exceed 100,000 square feet)

Residential classifications are indicated by density, instead of by housing type. This classification approach supports a variety of housing types for each density range, as long as the overall density of development is consistent with the plan's recommendations.

This plan focuses retail and moderate density housing (up to 12 DUA) between the I-85/Mallard Creek Church Road and I-485/U.S. 29 interchanges. Build out of the plan will result in approximately 2,408 acres, or about 44% of the study area, developing at a density of up to 4 DUA (Table #6). Most of the new housing in the study area will develop in this density range. About 300 acres, or about 6% of the study area are proposed at up to 8 DUA. About 438 acres, or 8% of the study area, are proposed to be developed at up to 12+ DUA, with most of this already approved through the rezoning process.

Given the land use proposed in the 1996 Northeast District Plan, approximately 2,820 acres (~9,869 units) of low density residential development could be added to the study area (This calculation assumes that vacant land proposed for low density residential development will develop at 3.5 units per acre). In addition, the proposed land use allows an additional 765 acres of residential (4+ DUA), 54 acres of retail, 54 acres of office space, and 1,145 acres of research in the study area. The 1996 Northeast District Plan recommends low density residential and research land uses along Mallard Creek Church Road and high density residential land uses at Mallard Creek Church Road and Highway 29.

# Northeast Area Plan Land Use



## Land Use

- |                              |               |  |                       |
|------------------------------|---------------|--|-----------------------|
| Residential (Up to 4 DUA)    | Retail        | Single Family, Multi-Family, Retail                        | Charlotte City Limits |
| Residential (Up to 8 DUA)    | Office        | Single Family, Multi-Family, Office                        | Greenway Facility     |
| Residential (12+ DUA)        | Industrial    | Single Family, Multi-Family, Institutional                 | Neighborhood Center   |
| Multi-Family, Retail         | Research      | Single Family, Multi-Family, Retail, Research              | Regional Center       |
| Retail, Office               | Utility       | Single Family, Multi-Family, Retail, Office, Institutional |                       |
| Retail, Office, Research     | Institutional | Charlotte Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction                   |                       |
| Multi-Family, Retail, Office | Open Space    |  |                       |

\*Note: May develop the property up to 12 DUA with implementation of the urban design guidelines and a 50% single family component.

Numbered areas indicate a change from the existing Northeast District Plan.

Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission.



Date: June 12, 2000

A significant difference between this area plan and the Northeast District Plan is that this one identifies the specific locations appropriate for residential development at densities higher than four units per acre (4 DUA). The 1996 plan relies on the use of the Locational Criteria outlined in the General Development Policies (GDPs) to determine these locations. Thus, it is difficult to determine specifically, the difference in residential densities proposed in the district plan and this area plan. The area plan, however, focuses development at densities of 12+ DUA in areas that should allow them to be served by the future mass transit system.

**Table 6**  
**Northeast Area Plan Buildout Scenario Comparison**  
 Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

Classification	Existing Zoning		1996 Proposed Land Use		1999 Proposed Land Use	
	Vacant Acreage	% of Total	Acreage	% of Total	Acreage	% of Total
Retail	61.00	2.41	54.00	1.02	67.21	1.27
Office	4.00	0.16	54.00	1.02	145.31	2.74
Institutional	45.00	1.78	127.00	2.39	127.20	2.39
Industrial/utilities	20.00	0.79	155.51	2.93	167.72	3.16
Research	181.00	7.15	1,145.40	21.56	16.00	0.30
Greenspace	0.00	0.00	76.93	1.45	122.45	2.30
Mixed Use	557.00	21.99	114.51	2.16	1,573.23	29.61
Residential (up to 4 DUA)	1,599.00	63.13	2,819.64	53.07	2,355.25	44.33
Residential (up to 8 DUA)	0.00	0.00	245.44	4.62	300.30	5.65
Residential (12+ DUA)	66.00	2.61	274.73*	5.17	437.93	8.25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,533.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>5,312.60</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>5,312.60</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* The General Development Policies include a matrix of locational criteria in an attempt to quantify the appropriateness of various densities and locations of multi-family proposals

Another recommended change is a decrease in the number of acres recommended for research development. Much of this acreage is now recommended for residential or mixed use development. The area plan also eliminates the Commercial Center shown in the 1996 Northeast District Plan at Odell School and Ridge roads. This recommendation is due primarily to the development of a mixed-use Commercial Center at Odell School and Quay roads. This phased development is proposed to include 700,000 square feet of retail space, 1.5 million square feet of office uses, 2,400 residential units at an overall density of 12 DUA, three transit stops and a 20 acre elementary school site. This development,

along with others in the area will serve the retail needs of residents within the study area.

Residential classifications are indicated by density, instead of by housing type. This classification approach supports a variety of housing types for each density range, as long as the overall density of development is consistent with the plan recommendations.

This plan focuses retail and moderate density housing (up to 12 DUA) between the I-85/Mallard Creek Church Road and I-485/U.S. 29 interchanges. Build out of the plan will result in approximately 2,408 acres, or about 44% of the study area, developing at a density of up to 4 DUA (Table #6). Most of the new housing developed in this area will develop in this density range. About 300 acres, or about 6% of the study area is proposed to be developed at up to 8 DUA. About 438 acres, or 8% of the study area is proposed to be developed at up to 12+ DUA, with most of this already approved through the rezoning process.

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## **Urban Design**

### **General Design Guidelines**

In general, future development should;

- Provide for a mixture of land uses within developments and ensure that new development is sensitive to existing neighborhoods.
- Provide well designed, compatible, neighborhood-oriented, higher density residential development where appropriate (i.e. transit service areas).
- Provide pedestrian/transit-oriented development where appropriate.
- Provide an interconnected street network with pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent developments.

- Provide usable open space within developments.

*Mixture of Land Uses:* Well designed mixed land uses stimulate pedestrian activity, support transit use and bicycling, create a sense of place and make for a more livable environment. A balanced land use pattern that includes a mixture of housing, shopping, employment and civic uses should be established.

The development pattern envisioned consists of varying types and densities of housing. In some instances, high density residential uses will be in close proximity to or intermixed with retail, employment and civic uses connected by a pedestrian network that is linked to a transit station. Densities will vary according to the type of station area that develops but, in general, the intensity of use should be greatest close to the transit facility.

*Protect and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods:* The character of existing neighborhoods should be protected and enhanced. New development that is built adjacent to existing neighborhoods should provide a transition to and be compatible with the established neighborhood.

*Neighborhood-Oriented Higher Density Residential:* Develop higher density residential housing as a part of the fabric of a larger neighborhood. Higher density residential housing should not be developed as large, inward-oriented complexes. Appropriate locations for this type of housing are shown on the proposed land use map and are typically recommended in areas within a half mile radius of proposed transit station locations.

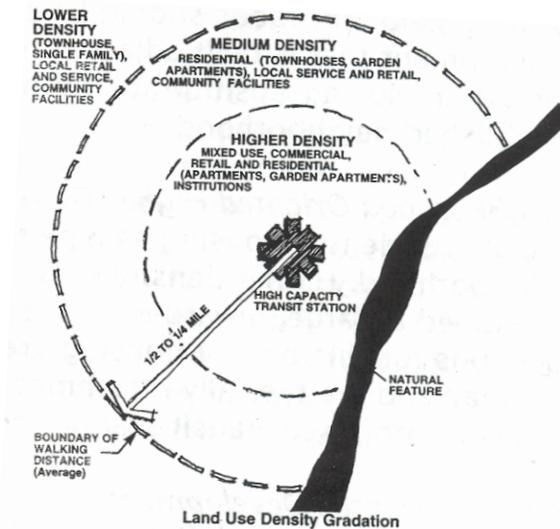
#### *Transit Oriented Development*

While there are many definitions of Transit Oriented Development (TOD), the primary objective of this recommendation is to move away from auto-dependent, dispersed development and toward a more concentrated, pedestrian friendly pattern. Typically, TODs increase the density of people near transit in a built environment that is pedestrian friendly and connected to transit. A TOD may be a single building, a group of buildings or a multiple block district.

More intense uses such as retail, offices and higher density residential should be encouraged in close proximity to the proposed transit stations. This gradation of density is important in creating a physical hierarchy and integrating the station area into the larger community.

While there is currently no transit service to or within the study area, both bus service and rapid transit should be encouraged to serve it. Specific sites located near proposed transit stations may have abundant uses including jobs, housing, retail, restaurants, daycare centers, services, athletic facilities, pedestrian plazas with fountains and furniture, bicycle parking and lockers, news stands and cafes. This variety of activities encourage transit stations to become more than just a place to park a car. Station locations should be designated as transit development sites and higher intensity development activity should concentrate at planned transit facilities and radiate outward from this hub. Because of their proximity to transit, these sites should have reduced parking requirements. Station area plans should be developed once transit station locations are determined.

**Figure # 2**  
*Land use density should gradually decrease with distance from the transit facility.*  
 Source: Planning for Transit Friendly Land Use



In some cases, a higher intensity of use may be possible if certain transportation and pedestrian accommodations are made. Increased density can manifest itself in different forms. In some instances, increased density may mean mid-rise office buildings while in others it may simply mean residential townhouses.

Proposed transit stops should be located in new residential subdivisions and these stops should be linked by a network of pedestrian pathways. Providing walkways that link various sections of the subdivision to collector or arterial roads with transit stops will result in more efficient pedestrian circulation. Walkways/sidewalks should be identified during the initial design

phases and preserved by methods defined in the current subdivision regulations.

Office developments should also be configured to capitalize on identified transit stops. Independent office and mixed-use developments should be encouraged to cluster into a planned and centralized configuration that allows for easier transit access, a larger concentration of users and the potential for reducing the overall parking supply. The potential also exists to link a series of these planned developments with service roads to further increase the efficiency of transit service.

#### *Pedestrian Oriented*

All transit passengers are pedestrians at some point during their travels. Pedestrian access points must be inviting and easily accessible. Walkways should be located in a manner that provides unimpeded access to retail buildings, residences and retail uses. This access should be direct and continuous, free from barriers and should provide an interesting environment for the pedestrian. Whenever possible, building entries should be oriented toward public streets, where the greatest pedestrian activity occurs. Multiple pedestrian pathways should be provided to encourage visual interest.

*Usable Open Space:* Meaningful open space should be incorporated into new development. This usable open space should be an integral part of the development's design scheme. Open space location and design should reinforce the activities that are generated by the surrounding land use. For example, residential areas have increased needs for active recreation while retail uses generate demand for passive open space.

#### *Interconnected Street Network*

Streets should be treated as a multi-purpose mixing ground, a part of the public realm, rather than a single use utility for cars. There should be an interconnected network that minimizes the use of arterial streets to reach destinations. Sidewalks on both sides of the street are essential for pedestrians. Many streets should have bike lanes as well.

### **Site and Building Design Guidelines for Residential Development up to 8 DUA**

- Orient front doors toward streets and sidewalks.
- Orient primary facades toward local and collector streets.

- Provide visual screening in residential areas adjacent to I-485.
- Retain and fully integrate existing historic structures and natural features.
- Recess garages from the front of the structure.
- Locate surface parking for multi-family and townhome units in the rear of the buildings.
- Avoid large expanses of parking.
- Provide quality hard and soft landscaping including tree plantings, squares, courtyards and greens. Use buildings to define edges and to provide a sense of enclosure.
- Position open spaces to take advantage of views into the site and to provide physical and visual links between various parts of the development.

### **Connectivity/Circulation**

An interconnected network of streets that give a variety of options for motorists, pedestrians or cyclists to reach their destination is essential to the concept of pedestrian orientation. The level of quality of streets is as important as the level of service. The proposed land use map (Map #5) illustrates, in general, areas where street connections should be made as development occurs.

The ability to comfortably walk to various destinations for business or leisure is a principal emphasis of the proposed circulation network. It is important that a network of pedestrian-oriented collector and local streets be designed to provide connectivity between developments and facilitate walking and biking. Greenways will provide access strictly for pedestrian or bicycle traffic to provide auto-free connections.

### **Parks/Greenways**

Parks and greenways are integral to livable and enjoyable communities. Parks function as neighborhood meeting places, as active and passive recreation areas, and as picnic spots. Because they accommodate public activities, parks are most appropriately located central to residential or core areas.

Besides the continued development of the Mallard Creek Community Park just outside of the study area, there are no current plans for additional park facilities in the study area. The Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department owns approximately 32 acres across Mallard Creek Road from Mallard Creek Community Park.

This plan has the following recommendations for parks within the study area:

- Development of the 32 acres across Mallard Creek Road from the Mallard Creek Community Park and south of the Homewood Acres subdivision and recreation space.
- Encouraging large scale developments to donate park land to the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department.
- Encouraging the development of private open space within subdivisions to enhance the public park system.

Greenways can play an important part in connecting people and places by linking neighborhoods, parks, offices, schools and shopping areas. They can also provide convenient and safe opportunities for passive recreation while simultaneously preserving natural areas for wildlife and vegetation.

This plan supports the extension of the Mallard and Clarks Creek Greenways as part of the Greenways Master Plan update to connect Mallard Creek Elementary, University Research Park, the UNCC campus, Mallard Creek Recreation Area and Blockbuster Pavilion. The phasing of this expansion is described as follows:

- **Phase Two:** Extend the existing greenway north along Clarks Creek, west along Mallard Creek to Harris Boulevard, and along Mallard Creek southeast to the Montessori School to connect to the existing University Research Park Trail.
- **Phase Three:** Extend the greenway southwest along Toby Creek.
- **Phase Four:** Extend the greenway along Mallard Creek from the University Research Park Trail to the Mecklenburg County line.

Future connections may extend into Cabarrus County and the City of Concord, and this document supports the development of those connections.

### **Transportation**

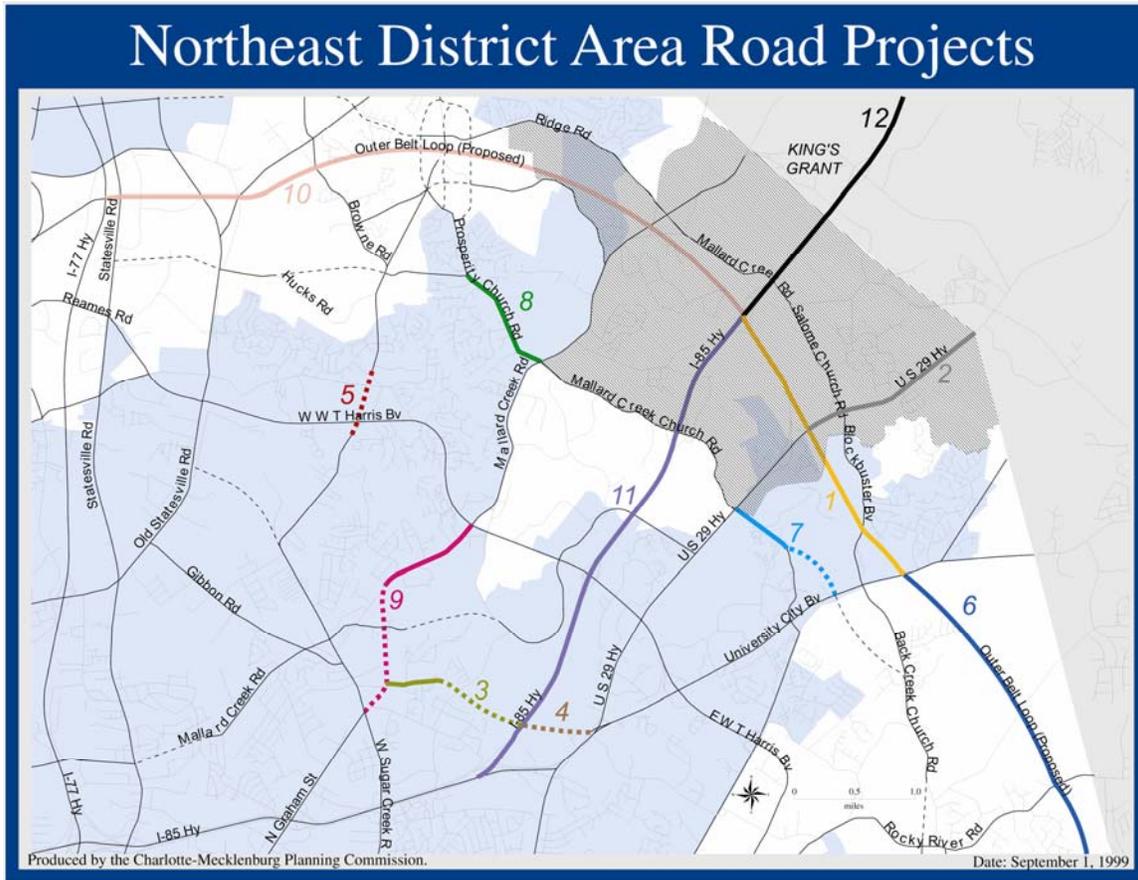
The current level of transportation congestion within the study area continues to be a primary concern of area residents. Congestion along Mallard Creek Road and the condition of Galloway Road are specific areas of concern. The widening of Mallard Creek Road from I-485 to the Mecklenburg-Cabarrus county line and from Prosperity Church Road to I-485 to four lanes and are listed as unfunded projects in the MUMPO 2020 Transportation Plan (Table #7).

**Table 7**  
**Scheduled Roadway Projects in the Northeast Study Area**

Source: Mecklenburg County Department of Engineering and Building Standards

Map 5 #	Location	Project Description	Begin Construction	Estimated Completion
1	I-485 (from I-85 to NC 49)	Construct six lane freeway on new location	Complete	Complete
2	U.S. Highway 29 (from Pavilion Blvd to Rocky River in Cabarrus County)	Widen to a six lane "reversible" facility on existing location	July 1999	~24 months from start date
3	'City Boulevard' (from Neal Road to east of I-85)	Construct four lane divided facility on new location with new interchange with I-85	July 1999	~24 months from start date
4	'City Boulevard' (from east of I-85 to existing NC 49 east of N. Tryon St)	Construct a multi-lane divided facility on new location with a new interchange at N. Tryon St. (U.S. 29). Project also includes the realignment of N. Tryon St. from south of Mineral Springs Road to Clark Boulevard.	July 2003	~24 months from start date
5	West Sugar Creek Road (from south of W.T. Harris Blvd to David Cox Road)	Construct two lane facility on new four lane right-of-way	July 1999	18 to 24 months from start date
6	I-485 (from NC 49 to NC 218)	Construct six lane freeway on new location	October 1999	2002
7	Mallard Creek Church Road (from U.S. 29 to NC Highway 49)	Widen four lane median divided facility a portion on new location	October 2001	24 months from begin date
8	Prosperity Church Road (from Mallard Creek Road to proposed Hucks Road Ext)	Widen to four lane facility on existing location	November 2002	November 2004
9	Mallard Creek Road/Graham Street Ext. (from University Blvd to WT Harris Blvd)	Widen to four or five lane facility part on new location	October 2005	24 months from start
10	I-485 (from U.S. Highway 21 to I-85)	Construct six lane freeway on new location	2007	24 months from start
11	I-85 (from U.S. 29/49 Connector to I-485)	Widen to six lanes	Late 2003	Not Available
12	I-85 (from I-485 to NC 73 in Cabarrus County)	Widen to eight lanes	After 2006	Not Available

Map 6: Northeast District Roadway Project Map



Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

There are also two unfunded roadway improvement projects proposed within the study area. These projects are listed in Table #8.

**Table 8**  
**Unfunded Roadway Projects in the Northeast Study Area**

Source: 2020 Transportation Plan

Location	2020 Listing #	Project Description
Mallard Creek Road (I-485 to Odell School Road)	52	Widen this section of Mallard Creek Road to four lanes
Mallard Creek Road (from Prosperity Church Road to I-485)	82	No description available.

## **1-485 Interchange Analysis Land Use Recommendations**

Of the 34 interchanges proposed for I-485, three are located within the study area. The recently adopted I-485 Interchange Analysis provides specific transportation recommendations for each of these interchanges, as well as some general recommendations that apply to all 34 interchanges.

These recommendations are the result of a thorough analysis that began in October 1998. The process involved planning staffs from the City of Charlotte; Cabarrus, Gaston, Mecklenburg and Union counties; and the Towns of Cornelius, Huntersville, Matthews, Mint Hill, Pineville and Stallings; plus considerable public involvement. The Northeast Area Plan supports both the general and interchange specific recommendations listed below.

### *Implement the General Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- Design interchange areas to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- Encourage internal connectivity between land uses/developments near interchanges.
- Include streetscape improvements as part of the design for each interchange.
- Locate any proposed service roads far enough away from I-485 so that land can be developed along both sides of the road.
- Ensure that any 'land-locked' property is provided access through the land subdivision process.
- Amend local subdivision ordinances to require developers to utilize natural land contours, or otherwise provide visual screening in residential areas along I-485 wherever the NCDOT is not proposing to construct noise walls.
- Provide adequate lighting at interchange areas. Lighting should not intrude into adjacent neighborhoods.

### *Implement the U.S. 29/I-485 Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- For the short term, add a loop in the southwest quadrant. The interchange may need to be an urban diamond.
- Align Salome Church Road with Pavilion Boulevard at U.S. 29 and signalize intersection.
- Extend control of access along U.S. 29 from I-485 north to Pavilion Boulevard.

*Implement the I-85 North/I-485 Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- Reassess the operation of I-85 from I-485 to Speedway Blvd/Concord Mills Blvd in response to both recent development in this area and to the proposed additional interchange
- Encourage connectivity between land uses/developments.

*Implement the Mallard Creek Road/I-485 Recommendations from the I-485 Interchange Analysis*

- Design interchange as an urban diamond.
- Request that the NCDOT facilitate a process to determine needed transportation improvements between the interchange and Concord Mills Mall and the surrounding development.
- Designate Odell School Road as a major thoroughfare on the Thoroughfare Plan.
- Fund the widening of Mallard Creek Road to four lanes from I-485 to Prosperity Church Road.

*Implement the 11 Transportation Improvement Projects (TIP) Currently Planned*

- Construct I-485 from I-85 to NC 49.
- Widen U.S. 29 to six lanes from Pavilion Boulevard to Rocky River in Cabarrus County.
- Construct a four lane divided facility with I-85 Interchange at City Boulevard from Neal Road to east of I-85.
- Construct a two-lane facility on new four-lane right-of-way at West Sugar Creek Road from south of W.T. Harris Boulevard to David Cox Road.
- Construct I-485 from NC 49 to NC 218.
- Widen Mallard Creek Church Road to a four lane median divided facility from U.S. 29 to NC 49.
- Widen Prosperity Church Road to a four-lane facility from Mallard Creek Road to the proposed Hucks Road Extension.
- Widen Mallard Creek Road/Graham Street Extension to a four or five lane facility from University Boulevard to W.T. Harris Boulevard.
- Construct I-485 from U.S. 21 to I-85.
- Widen I-85 from U.S. 29/NC 49 to I-485 to six lanes.
- Widen I-85 from I-485 to NC 73 to eight lanes.

*Implement the following road improvements recommended by this plan:*

- Widen Mallard Creek Road between Mallard Creek Church Road and Salome Church Road to four lanes.
- Improve and widen Galloway Road between Mallard Creek Road and I-85.

## **Transit/Rapid Transit**

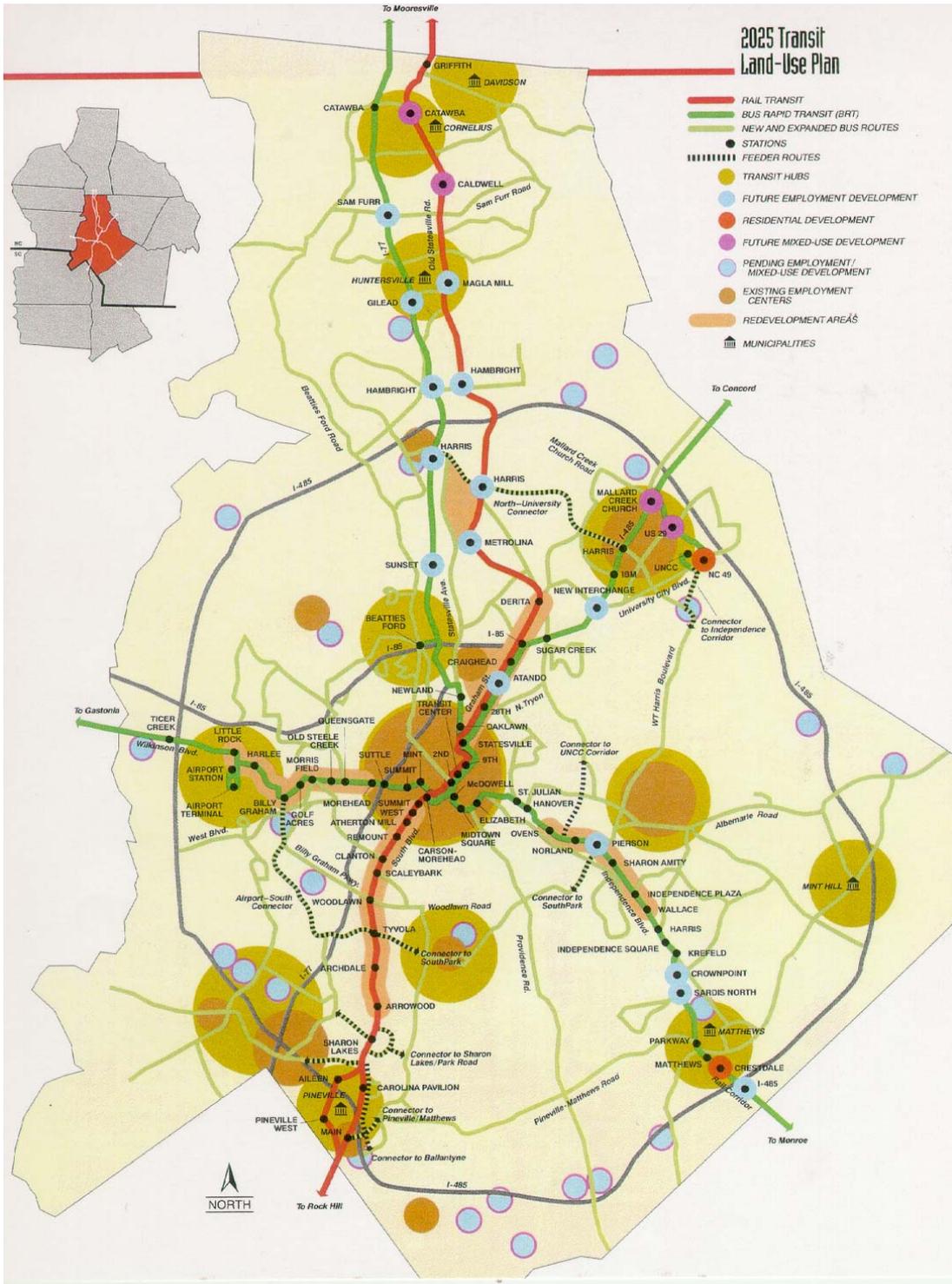
Currently, there is no transit service directly to or within the study area. The UNCC area, just outside of the study area, is served by two local bus routes: UNCC/Southpark and UNCC/Uptown. Both of these routes have stops along East Mallard Creek Church Road.

Charlotte's Five-Year Transportation Plan (1997-2002) emphasizes the expansion of transit services as a means to lessen traffic congestion and provide alternatives for travel in the Charlotte area. The Five-Year Transportation Plan identifies five transit hubs. As part of this plan, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC), which oversees the development of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's rapid transit system, will contract for the development of a county-wide transit (bus) services plan that should be completed by the Fall of 2000. In addition, the City of Concord is considering developing a transit services plan. This area plan strongly recommends that local and express bus service be expanded to the study area with stops along Mallard Creek Church Road and extended to the proposed mixed-use commercial center at Odell School and Quay Roads.

According to the 2025 Transit Land Use Plan, the University Corridor will serve the study area. This corridor is recommended as a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line. This option consists of buses operating in exclusive busways with on-line stations just like a rail system, or on roads with improvements to allow buses to bypass traffic congestion. BRT is usually less expensive to build and operate than rail and is particularly compatible with the low-density land uses that characterize many communities in Mecklenburg County. Because of this area's dispersed development pattern, the 2025 Integrated Transit Land Use Plan also recommends an extensive feeder and shuttle bus system to serve the future and existing employment sites that are beyond convenient pedestrian access to the proposed stations.

Currently, the University Corridor route depicted in the 2025 Integrated Transit Land Use Plan follows I-85 to East Mallard Creek Church Road terminating at the UNCC campus at Highway 49 (Map #7). BRT routes were also considered along U.S. 29.

Map 7: 2025 Integrated Transit Land Use Plan



An Alternatives Analysis for the University Corridor is proposed to begin in early 2000. This analysis is a general 12-18 month study that leads to the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) – what form the transit will be (i.e. rail or bus) and the route it will follow. Tasks performed in this stage include the following:

- Development of scope for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- Identifying and evaluating reasonable technologies and alignments
- Ridership modeling
- Initial identification and evaluation of possible station locations
- Cost estimates

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires significant evaluation of alternatives before investing in major transit projects to ensure that funds are invested wisely. Similarly, the citizens of Charlotte-Mecklenburg would want this same level of review before investing local sales tax revenues in a major transit project. As a result, the MTC plans to follow the FTA criteria when planning, designing and building the area's rapid transit system.

The next step after the completion of the Alternatives Analysis would be preliminary engineering work. During this 18-24 month process, the EIS is drafted and a financial plan is developed. Other tasks include the following:

- Comparing the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to No Build and Transportation System Management options
- Evaluating and selecting station locations
- Updating ridership modeling and estimated costs
- Preliminary design and right-of-way plans
- Continue the EIS process

After the preliminary engineering is complete, the project moves into the final design phase. This phase includes the preparation of final right-of-way plans, construction documents and final cost estimates. After approximately five years of planning and design, the project moves into the construction phase, and ground is broken for rapid transit in the corridor. It is important to note that public involvement is crucial and is included in each step of the process.

This plan recommends that in addition to the transit stations proposed at Mallard Creek Church Road and 1-85 and Mallard Creek Church Road and

U.S. 29, a transit station be considered at the Mecklenburg-Cabarrus County line in the vicinity of the Concord Mills Mall.

## **Bicycle Facilities**

Charlotte-Mecklenburg is making a concentrated effort to develop a neighborhood lifestyle for its residents. An essential element of this effort is the provision of alternative transportation choices through improved transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Bicycle Transportation Plan*, completed in March 1999 and recently adopted by City Council, is the first step in encouraging more bicycling for transportation purposes in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.

The Bikeway Improvement Plan (BIP) portion of the study recommends a bikeway improvement network concept that recognizes the different skill levels of bicyclists. The intent of the bikeway improvement plan is to provide bicycle-friendly streets that will accommodate both advanced and basic cyclists, and both short and long distance trips. While it may not be possible to make every major thoroughfare in Charlotte-Mecklenburg bicycle-friendly, the improvement plan provides a reasonable blueprint for implementing an improved bicycling environment.

Three portions of two roads within this study area are listed as Priority Bikeway Improvements in the plan. These improvements are outlined and will be implemented as follows:

- *1.4 miles of shoulder on Mallard Creek Church Road from Prosperity Church Road to I-85.*  
The BIP describes paved shoulders as appropriate treatments on rural two lane roadways. These roadways are often narrow, and a paved shoulder not only provides a safe area for cyclists, but safety benefits for motorists as well.
- *1 mile of signed connection on Mallard Creek Church Road from I-85 to North Tryon.*  
The BIP describes signed connections as a method to provide connectivity between other bikeways or to direct bicyclists to major attractions in areas where there is inadequate width for any other improvement, or on local residential streets where traffic volumes and speeds are low.
- *3.7 miles of wide outside lane on U.S. 29 from University City Boulevard to Pavilion Boulevard.*  
The BIP describes wide outside lanes as typically placed on major arterials. Wide outside lanes connect areas over longer distances, and are primarily designed to improve conditions for

advanced cyclists on higher-volume, higher-speed roadways. Wide outside lanes are often the preferred treatments in commercial areas where there are many curb cuts.

In general, the BIP recommends that these bikeways be part of new roadway construction or roadway widening projects and that bikeway facilities be considered in the planned transit corridors. The BIP is a recommended framework from which to begin a comprehensive bicycle planning program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg and can be modified if needs and circumstances warrant.

In addition to the BIP, there are specific policies to support bicycle planning efforts. The Northeast Area plan supports all of the policies outlined in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Bicycle Transportation Plan. Policies that most significantly affect the study area include the following:

- Policy 1: Incorporate Bicycle Facilities in Transportation Planning Activities
- Policy 2: Seek All Potential Funding Opportunities to Implement the Bicycle Transportation Plan
- Policy 3: Include Bicycle Improvements in On-going Transit and Greenway Planning
- Policy 4: Design and Build All New and Reconstructed Roadways to be Bicycle-Friendly
- Policy 5: Implement Bicycle Improvements in Conjunction with Routine Maintenance and Resurfacing Activities

### **Environmental Quality**

The Northeast, like Mecklenburg County overall, generally has a healthy environment that contributes to making this a desirable and livable community. The following measures are recommended to maintain or improve the area's current environmental quality.

- Implement the Surface Water Improvement Management (SWIM) program buffers, greenway dedication and stormwater management.
- Maintain conformity with USEPA Air Quality Standards.
- Pursue environmentally friendly alternative modes of transportation.

### **Conclusion**

The study area is an extremely desirable location for both residents and businesses. Increased growth and development pressures have begun to

transform this area from a primarily rural setting to a more urban community. This development has resulted in increased traffic congestion and an increased need for usable open space and could jeopardize the current environmental quality.

This area plan provides a framework for future growth and development. It also seeks to ensure that the transformation of this area from a primarily rural setting to a more urban community happens in an orderly manner. It encourages future development that is sensitive to existing neighborhoods and business owners, supportive of transit and respectful of the environment. Future development will provide for continued economic vitality, environmental integrity and pedestrian oriented design. The area will have a connected street and open space network that encourages walking and bicycling.

Volume 2 of this plan provides more detailed information strategies needed to achieve the plan vision.

## Appendix

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### Population by Origin and Destination (O & D) Zone

Since the Tract information extends beyond the study area boundaries, we can use Origin and Destination (O & D) Zone data, to more closely determine the population of the study area as 2,647 in 1990 (Map #8 and Table #9).

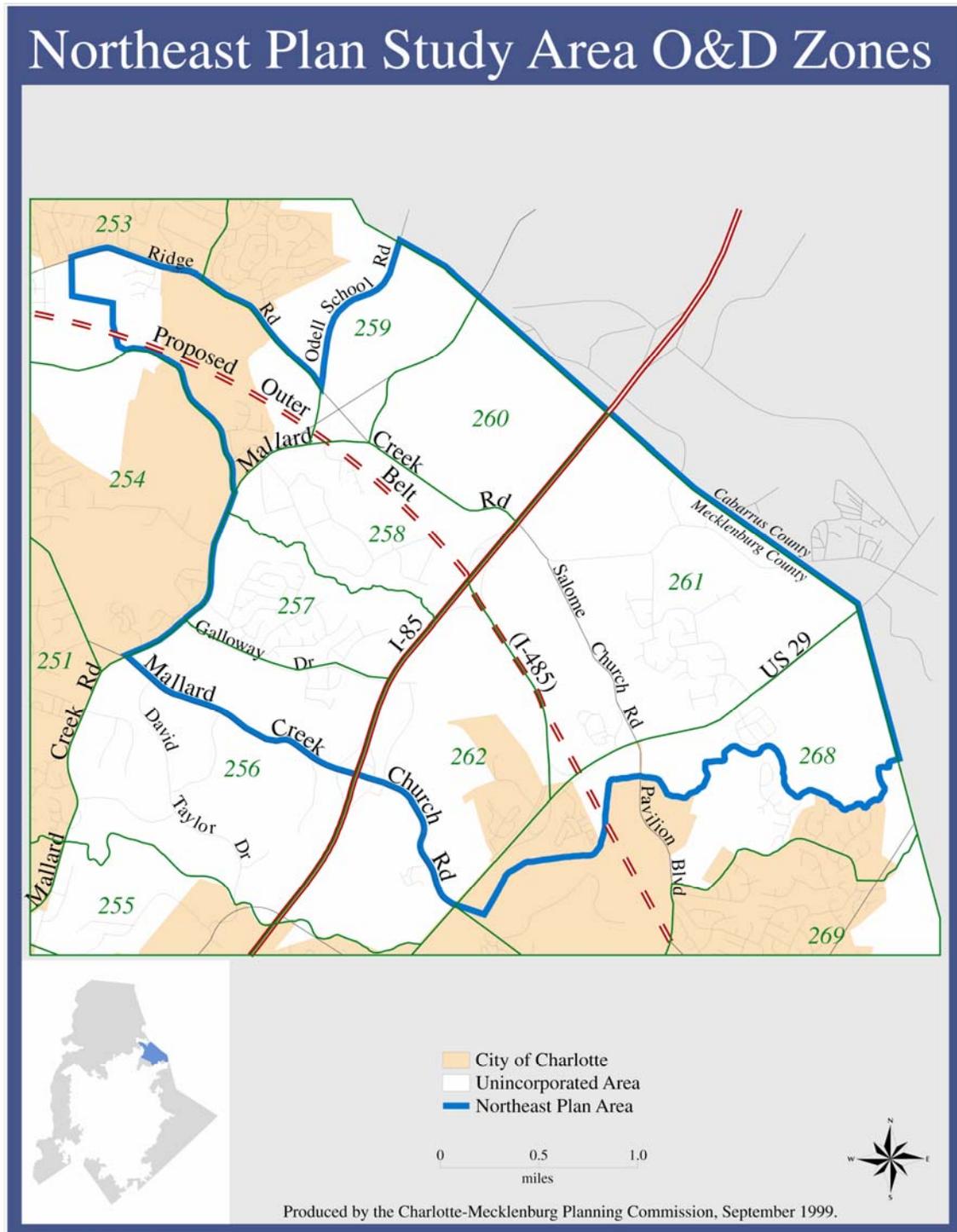
As shown, O & D Zones 253 and 259 experienced significant growth between 1990 and 1996. A majority of the growth in both zones can be attributed to the development of the Highland Creek subdivision. The Prosperity and Quail Ridge subdivisions were also developed during this time period and are part of Zone 253. Zones 254 and 261 have experienced a growth rate of over 100 percent. The Chatham, Hayden Commons, Katelyn Moors, Leacroft and the Tradition subdivisions are part of Zone 254 while Stoney Creek Commons (multi-family) is part of Zone 261.

**Table 9**  
**1999 Northeast Area plan Demographic Analysis**

Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission/Mecklenburg County Tax Office

O & D Zone	1990 Population	1996 Population	1990-96 % Population Change	1990 Dwelling Units	1996 Dwelling Units	1990-96 % Dwelling Unit Change
253	209	1,516	625%	87	685	687%
254	240	564	135	89	237	166
256	204	215	5	74	79	7
257	0	0	0	0	0	0
258	191	315	65	105	116	10
259	115	957	732	47	432	819
260	52	52	0	22	22	0
261	401	851	112	140	346	147
262	91	95	4	335	337	1
268	1,144	1,510	32	482	637	32

Map 8: Northeast Plan Study Area Origin and Destination Zones\*

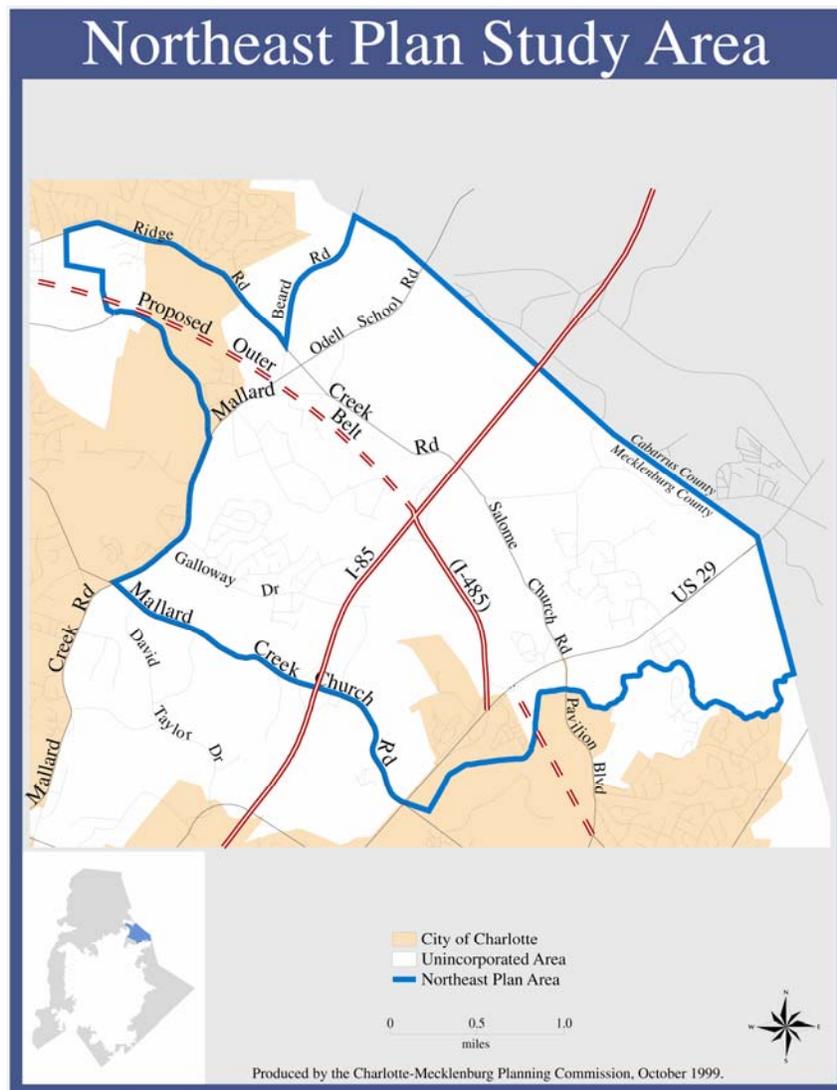


\*Note: the numbers indicated on this map correspond to the O&D Zone numbers on the preceding table.

# Northeast Area Plan Volume 2: Implementation Plan

Charlotte-Meckleburg Planning Commission

June 12, 2000



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# **IMPLEMENTATION**

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## **Introduction**

This document (Volume 2) outlines the steps needed to implement the concept described in the companion document, the Northeast Small Area Plan, Volume 1: Concept Plan. Elected officials will not adopt this implementation document, although some of the actions identified may require future County Commission approval. These items will be brought before the appropriate body on an as-needed basis.

## **Plan Strategies**

The Concept Plan portion of the Northeast Small Area Plan focuses on seven key issue areas:

- Land Use/Zoning/Urban Design
- Transportation/Mobility
- Parks/Open Space
- Environmental Quality

In addition, the Concept Plan identifies specific planning goals and recommendations for each of these issues. The following describes the goals and identifies strategies to implement the recommendations:

### **Land Use**

- *Use the rezoning process to ensure that proposed development is consistent with the land use recommendations in the plan.* Almost 75% of the study area is zoned R-3, a single family district that allows development at a density of up to three dwelling units per acre. A rezoning will be required if properties are to be developed at a higher density residential use or for some other non-residential use.
- *Encourage the development of Station Area Plans within the transit corridors.* Station Area Plans identify and establish an area around a transit station where certain land use objectives and development principles are defined. These controls can form the basis for a special Station Area Zone in the Zoning Ordinance.

### **Urban Design**

- *Use the rezoning process to ensure that proposed development is consistent with the design guidelines proposed in the plan.* The rezoning process should be used to ensure compliance with the design guidelines.
- *Encourage the development of a more detailed land use analysis and, perhaps, a Station Area Plan within the University Transit Corridor.*

The Station Area Plan recommends specific land uses for the station area and may require certain zoning techniques and/or design guidelines. The Local Preferred Analysis should consider this information and include recommendations. If an LPA is not conducted for the University Corridor, a Station Area Plan should be developed.

- *Use the subdivision development process to ensure that a pedestrian network is provided.*

### **Connectivity/Circulation**

- *Develop connectivity/circulation through the rezoning and subdivision development process.* Provide vehicular and pedestrian connections as indicated on the Proposed Land Use Plan map.

### **Transportation**

- *Work with the NCDOT to ensure that the recommendations for the U.S. 29, Interstate 85 North and Mallard Creek Road/I-485 interchanges included as part of the I-485 Interchange Analysis, and supported by this document, are implemented accordingly.*
- *Complete the eleven roadway projects that are included in the TIP.*
- *Work to fund the two unfunded roadway projects proposed within the study area.*

### **Transit/Rapid Transit**

- *Continue plans to expand the 29 Express transit service.*
- *Expand regular transit service within the study area.*
- *Conduct an Alternatives Analysis for the University Corridor.* The analysis is a 12-18 month study that leads to the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative Mode and Alignment (LPA) or, what form the transit will be and what route it will take.

### **Bicycle Facilities**

- *Work with the CDOT and NCDOT to ensure that the Priority Bikeways improvements within this study area are part of new roadway construction or roadway widening projects.*
- *Work with the CDOT and NCDOT to ensure that bikeway facilities are considered in the planned transit corridors.*

### **Parks/Greenways**

- *Develop the 32 acres across Mallard Creek Road from the Mallard Creek Community Park and south of the Homewood Acres subdivision.*
- *Encourage large scale developments to donate park land to the Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department.* This could largely be accomplished through the development process. Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation should work with developers of large-scale projects to determine the feasibility of

providing usable open space in the form of neighborhood parks, passive recreation space, etc., as part of their development.

- *Develop private open space within new subdivisions to enhance the public park system.* Again, this could be accomplished through the development process. Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation should coordinate with subdivision developers to assess the possibility of providing neighborhood parks to fulfill the open space portion of their development. The park could become part of the Parks and Recreation inventory and be maintained by the department or else be maintained through a maintenance agreement with the homeowners association.
- *Expand the Mallard and Clarks Creek Greenway.* Land for the expansion should be acquired through the development process and through negotiations with property owners. After the remaining three phases of this greenway are complete, Parks and Recreation should pursue connections into Cabarrus County.

#### **Environmental Quality**

- *Implement the Surface Water Improvement Management (SWIM) program buffers, greenway dedication and stormwater management.*
- *Maintain conformity with USEPA Air Quality Standards.*
- *Pursue environmentally friendly alternative modes of transportation.*



**CHARLOTTE.**

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