

Concord
NORTH CAROLINA



Downtown Master Plan

November 2021

WHAT WE HEARD

“ MORE RESTAURANT & DINING OPTIONS •
MORE ENTERTAINMENT • MORE FESTIVALS
& EVENTS • MORE FAMILY ACTIVITIES •
MORE OUTDOOR AND PUBLIC GATHERING
SPACE • MAINTAIN SMALL TOWN CHARM
• MORE OUTDOOR DINING & SEATING •
WALKABILITY • HISTORY • TREES & GREEN
SPACE • PUBLIC ART • AMENITIES ”



HOW WE LISTENED

2,800+ unique website visits
740+ survey respondents
160+ meeting participants

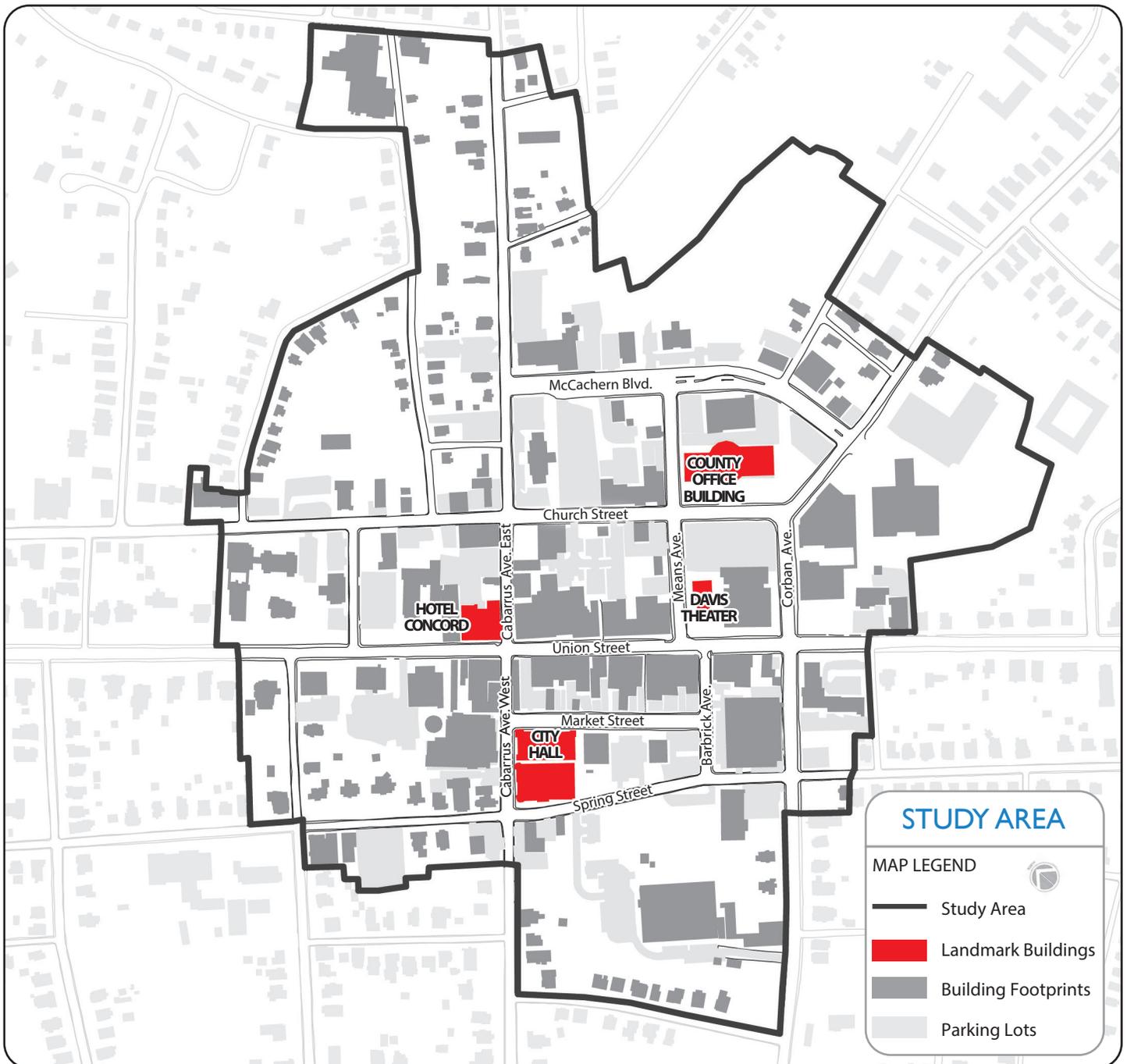
HOW THE MASTER PLAN WAS DEVELOPED



OVERVIEW

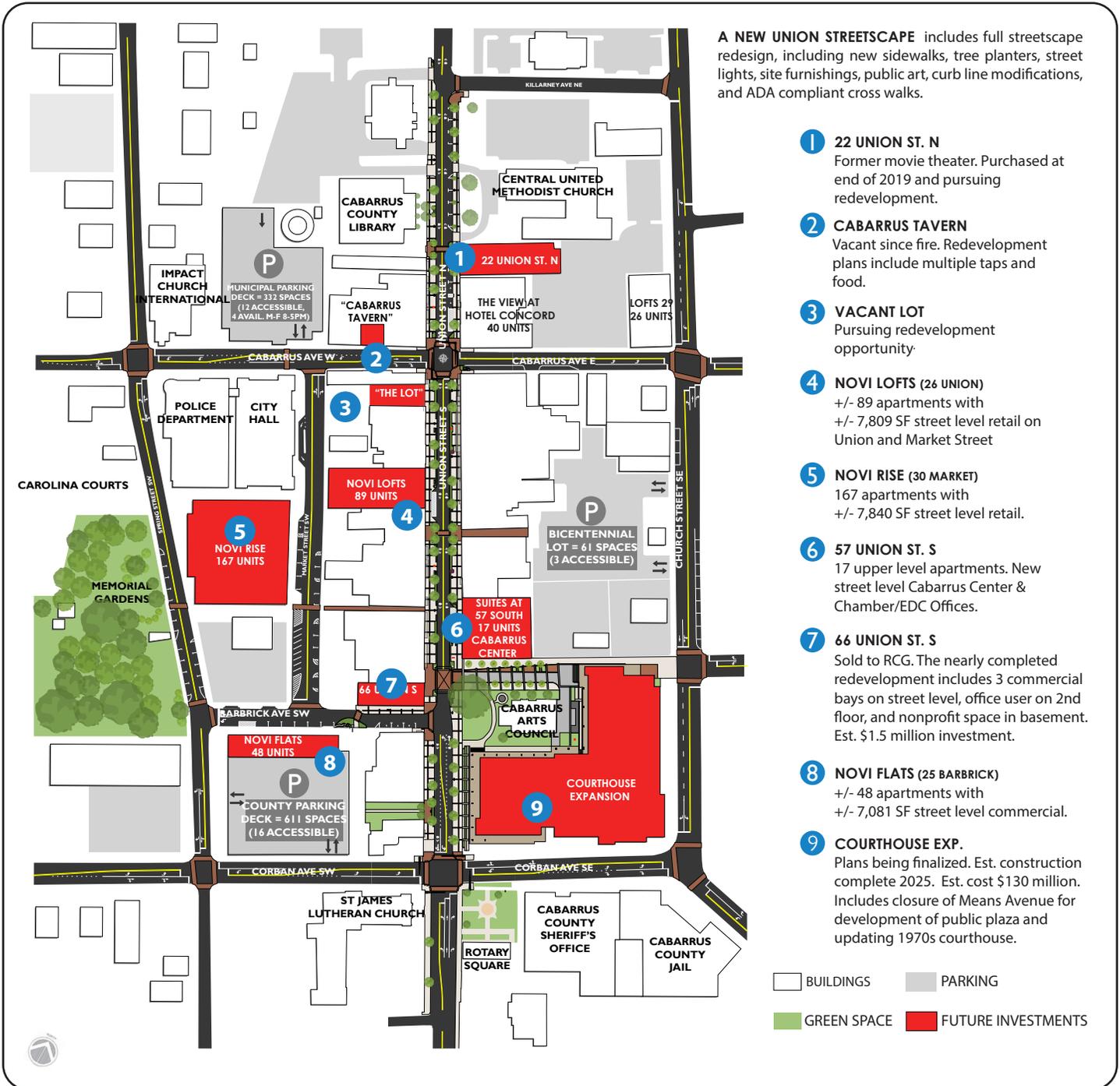
The 2021 Downtown Master Plan is a 5-year update to the 2016 Downtown Master Plan. The 2016 Master Plan was the result of three independent studies conducted by the City that included information from the 2016 *Downtown Urban Design Plan* completed by Benchmark Planning, the *Downtown Parking Study* by VHB Engineering (as updated by Stantec in 2021), and the *Downtown Market Analysis Study* by UNC's School of Government, which was not updated as part of the 2021 Master Plan.

The overall plan update and previous plans included input from City residents and business owners, City staff, Concord Downtown Development Corporation (CDDC) staff, and Cabarrus County staff. The Master Plan is based upon a firm foundation of analysis, public input, recommendations from previous studies, and information gathered during this update. The plan focuses on the municipal service district boundary, including the addition of Cabarrus Avenue East corridor.



PROJECTS SHAPING DOWNTOWN

Since the 2016 Downtown Master Plan, over \$15 million has been invested by the public sector in downtown to help leverage over \$32 million in private sector investment. Currently, a total of \$205 million of public and private sector investment in major downtown projects is underway with some nearing completion. Many of these projects are listed below, including renderings displayed on the following page. The public sector investments underway include the new Union Streetscape project and the County Courthouse renovations. The private sector projects include Novi Rise (30 Market Street), Novi Lofts (26 Union Street South), Novi Flats (25 Barbrick Avenue), 22 Union Street North, Cabarrus Tavern, Morris Building, 57 Union Street South (completed), 66 Union Street South, and new townhome development adjacent to the McEachern greenway. Many other projects are underway in addition to these major investments.



PROJECTS SHAPING DOWNTOWN

UNION STREETSCAPE



NOVI LOFTS - 26 UNION ST



COURTHOUSE RENOVATIONS



NOVI RISE - 30 MARKET ST



57 UNION ST LOFTS



NOVI FLATS - 25 BARBRICK AVE



CABARRUS TAVERN



66 UNION ST



PLANNING FRAMEWORK

During the 2016 master planning process, five major vision themes emerged that helped establish the planning framework. This planning framework was carried forward as part of the 2021 Master Plan update. The framework ties the analysis and public input to the recommendations that are provided in the implementation matrix (pages 30 - 33).



DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The *Downtown Market Analysis Study* outlined the types and amounts of new development that downtown can support and absorb for the 2015 - 2025 time frame, covering the 2016 and 2021 Master Plan update. The results of the *Market Study*, originally completed in 2015, provided the basis for the private and public sector investments since 2016. The development program from the 2016 Plan projected the amounts of built space downtown can support in retail and office square footage and residential units. A new market analysis was not completed for the 5-year update, as the 10-year market projections from the 2016 Plan remain on track as displayed below.

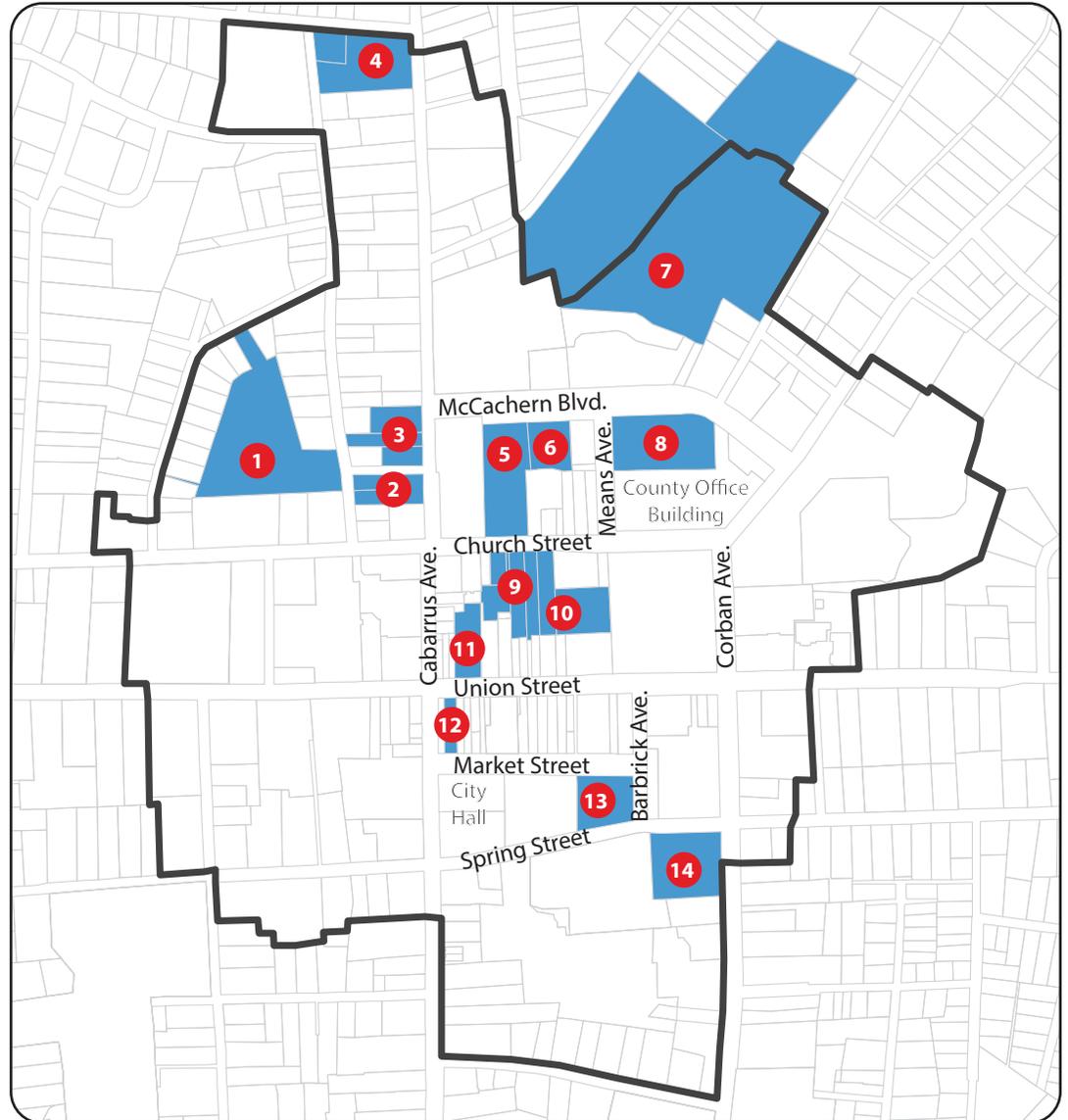
2015 EXISTING CONDITIONS	10-YEAR MARKET PROJECTIONS
104 ACRES	390 - 680 RESIDENTIAL UNITS
226 PARCELS	80 K - 100 K RETAIL SQ FT
1.8 M BUILT SQ FT	27 K - 48 K OFFICE SQ FT
17 K DENSITY [SQ FT/ ACRE]	TBD HOTEL (FUTURE STUDY)
\$176 M BUILDING ASSESSED VALUE	
\$213 M TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE	

OPPORTUNITY SITES

The 2016 Downtown Urban Design Plan identified opportunity sites to accommodate the projected development program as updated below. The opportunity site analysis considered available vacant land on known or potential redevelopment sites and in existing buildings. In general, the analysis identified sites that were owned by the public, actively being marketed for sale or development (willing sellers), and/or parcels where the land was more valuable than the current use.

POTENTIAL SITES

- 1 51 Brumley Avenue NE
- 2 47 Cabarrus Avenue E & 48 Brumley Avenue NE
- 3 57 Cabarrus Avenue E & 2 Vacant Lots
- 4 9 & 15 Reed Street NE
- 5 19 Church Street S
- 6 46 McCachern Blvd SE
- 7 Greenway Park
- 8 66 McCachern Blvd SE
- 9 Bicentennial Plaza Lots
- 10 2 Vacant Lots
- 11 11 Union Street S
- 12 4 Union Street S
- 13 45 Spring Street SW
- 14 74 Spring Street SW



OPPORTUNITY SITES

PUBLIC INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Another important component of the Master Plan was the identification of public investments needed and desired by the community to directly support downtown development. The primary public investments are focused on providing parking, streetscape improvements, government facilities, and parks. The key goals of the investment strategies outlined in this plan are to:

- Improve the quality of the downtown experience for residents, workers and visitors, and
- Improve the functioning of downtown networks – traffic, infrastructure and parking to maximize the potential return on the public investments for taxpayers, downtown property owners and downtown businesses through increased tax revenue, increased property values and increased sales.

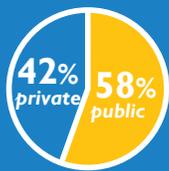
PARKING ANALYSIS

The Downtown Parking Study completed as part of the 2016 Downtown Master Plan was updated for the 2021 Downtown Master Plan update. The update examined existing parking supply and utilization, and projected future parking conditions based upon ongoing development projects identified in downtown. The update concluded there is enough parking to meet the demand for the next five years. The update also included additional recommendations for improving the operation and management of the parking system, emphasizing the effective utilization of all parking resources within downtown.

PARKING STUDY UPDATE

STATISTIC HIGHLIGHTS

2,650 PUBLIC & PRIVATE



PARKING SPACES OWNERSHIP

59% PUBLIC PARKING utilization

1,000 PARKING SPACE RAW SURPLUS

+300 NET GAIN OF NEW PARKING SPACES since 2015

- The opening of the County parking deck on Barbrick Avenue helped create a net gain of over +300 spaces in downtown since the previous study. As noted in the community survey, the perception of public parking is changing. Only 17% of survey respondents cited parking as their least favorite thing about downtown. In most any other community, parking is almost always at the top of the list.
- There are 2,650 parking spaces in downtown with a combined city / county public parking utilization rate of 59% during the peak hour from 10am to 11am on Monday court days. On-street parking has the highest demand during that time with a peak occupancy of 88%.
- A future parking demand increase of +550 spaces is expected over the next five years, which is well within the City’s ability to absorb the new demand without creating new parking options.
- There is a planned reduction of -60 on-street parking spaces as part of the Union Streetscape Enhancement project, which can easily be accommodated across Bicentennial Lot, or the City or County parking decks.
- The parking study update recommends numerous management strategies for the near-term that may help the City delay or eliminate the need to construct additional parking in the next five years.

	2001	2007	2015	2021	% CHANGE 2015 TO 2021
TOTAL PARKING SPACES	2,473	2,271	2,356	2,650	+12.5%
CITY POPULATION	55,977	65,431	83,506	105,240	+26%

- Notes:
- 2001 and 2007 parking data from the Downtown Parking Management Plan Update (2007).
 - 2015 data collected March 2015 by VHB.
 - 2001 and 2021 population figures are from the 2000 and 2020 U.S. Census.
 - 2007 and 2015 population figures are from the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) data.
 - 2021 parking data collected in February and March of 2021 by City Staff and Stantec.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The development framework for downtown aligns the development program to available opportunity sites and utilizes a catalytic public investment strategy to encourage public and private sector redevelopment and improvements to the downtown experience. It is the guide for revitalizing downtown.

In order to achieve the recommended development program, the Master Plan identifies Catalytic Project concepts that are designed strategically to:

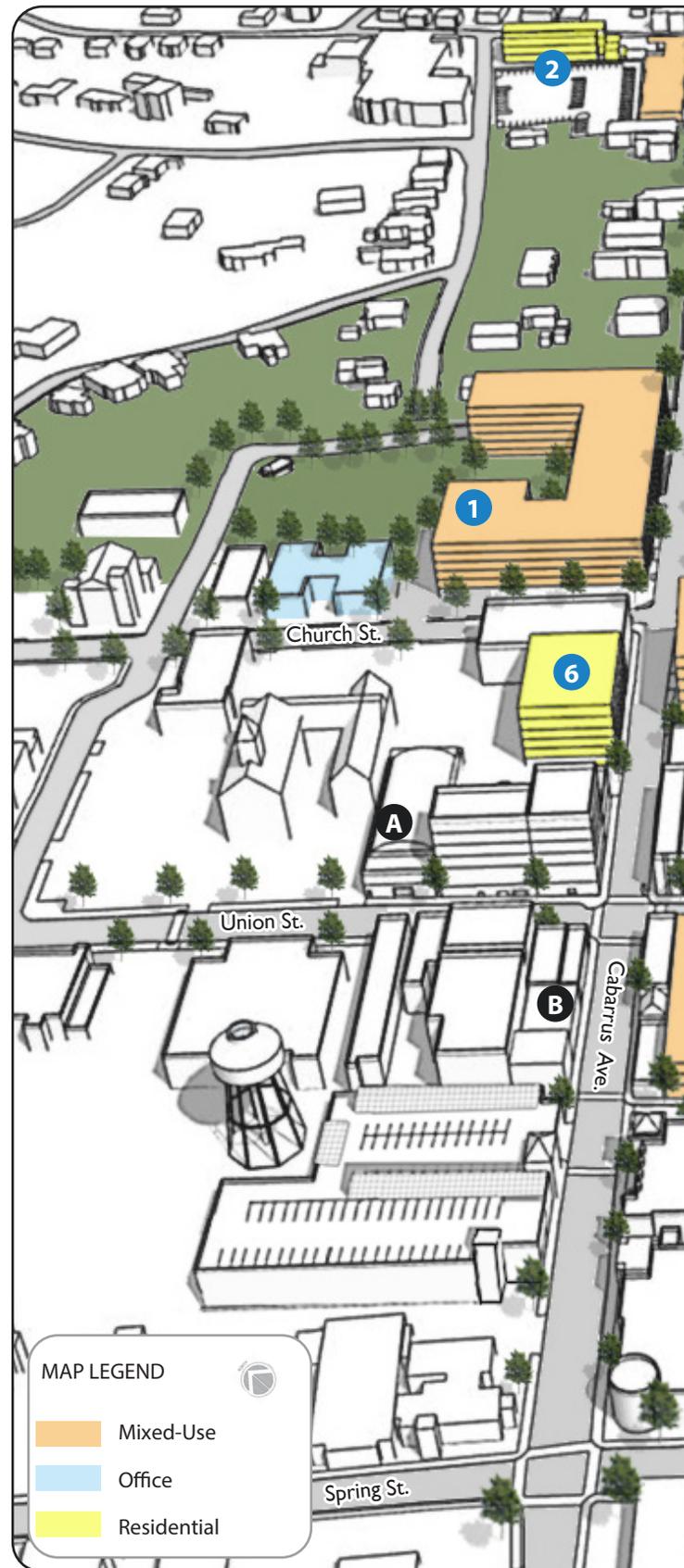
- Focus on specific areas of downtown where key public interventions can leverage private investments;
- Strengthen and meet the demand for downtown businesses, commercial space and residential units;
- Maximize the fiscal, economic and community benefits to the downtown and the entire City;
- Create and sustain a new downtown experience that attracts new investment, visitors, residents and workers.

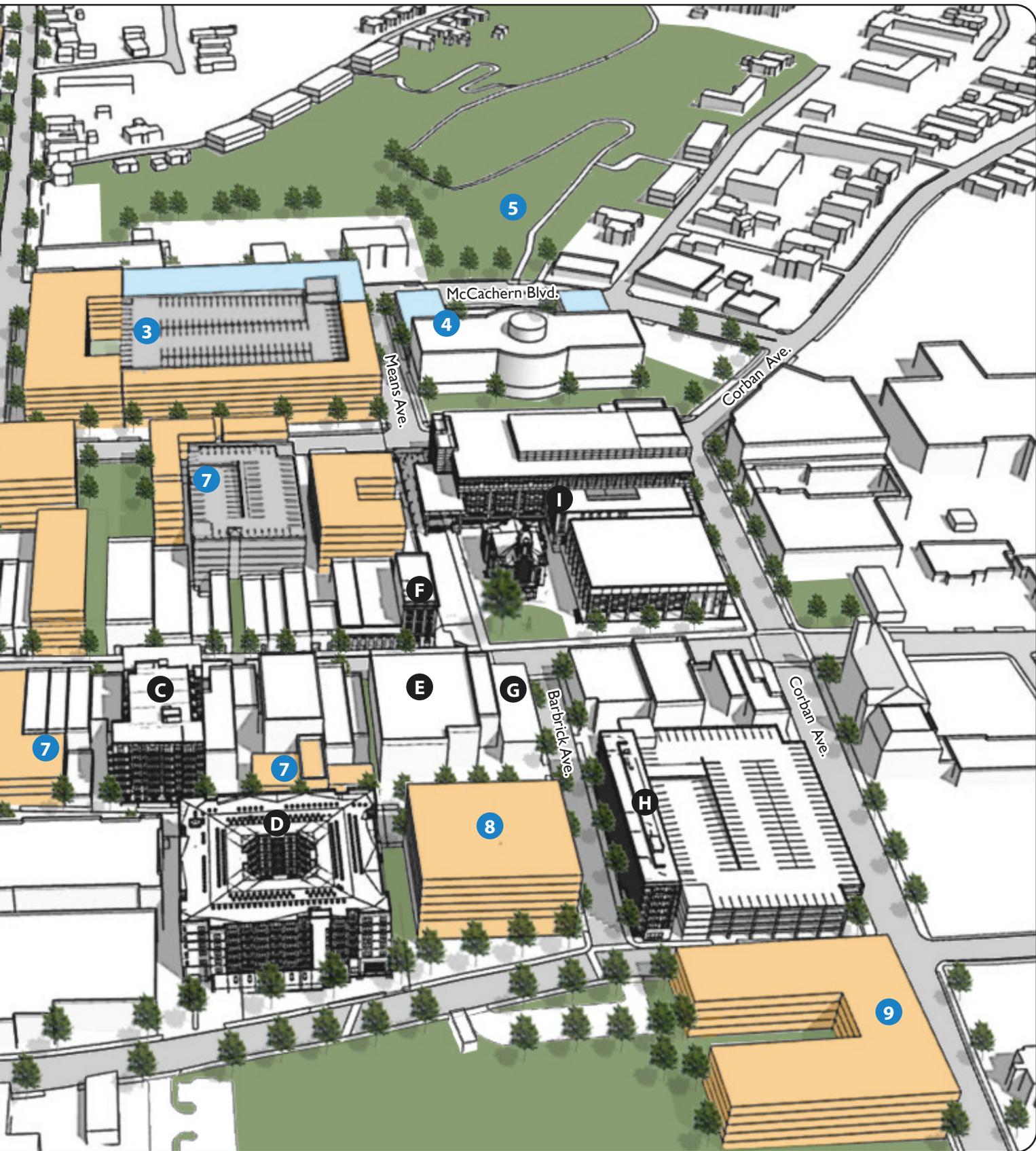
OPPORTUNITIES

- 1** Gold Mine Park Block
- 2** Cabarrus Ave. at Reed St.
- 3** Church Street East Side
- 4** Office & Outdoor Venue
- 5** Greenway Park
- 6** Cabarrus East Residential
- 7** Mixed-Use Infill
- 8** Mixed-Use Redevelopment
- 9** Mixed-Use Redevelopment

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- A** 22 Union Street North
- B** Cabarrus Tavern
- C** Novi Lofts (26 Union St S)
- D** Novi Rise (30 Market St)
- E** Morris Building
- F** 57 Union Street South
- G** 66 Union Street South
- H** Novi Flats (25 Barbrick Ave)
- I** Courthouse Expansion

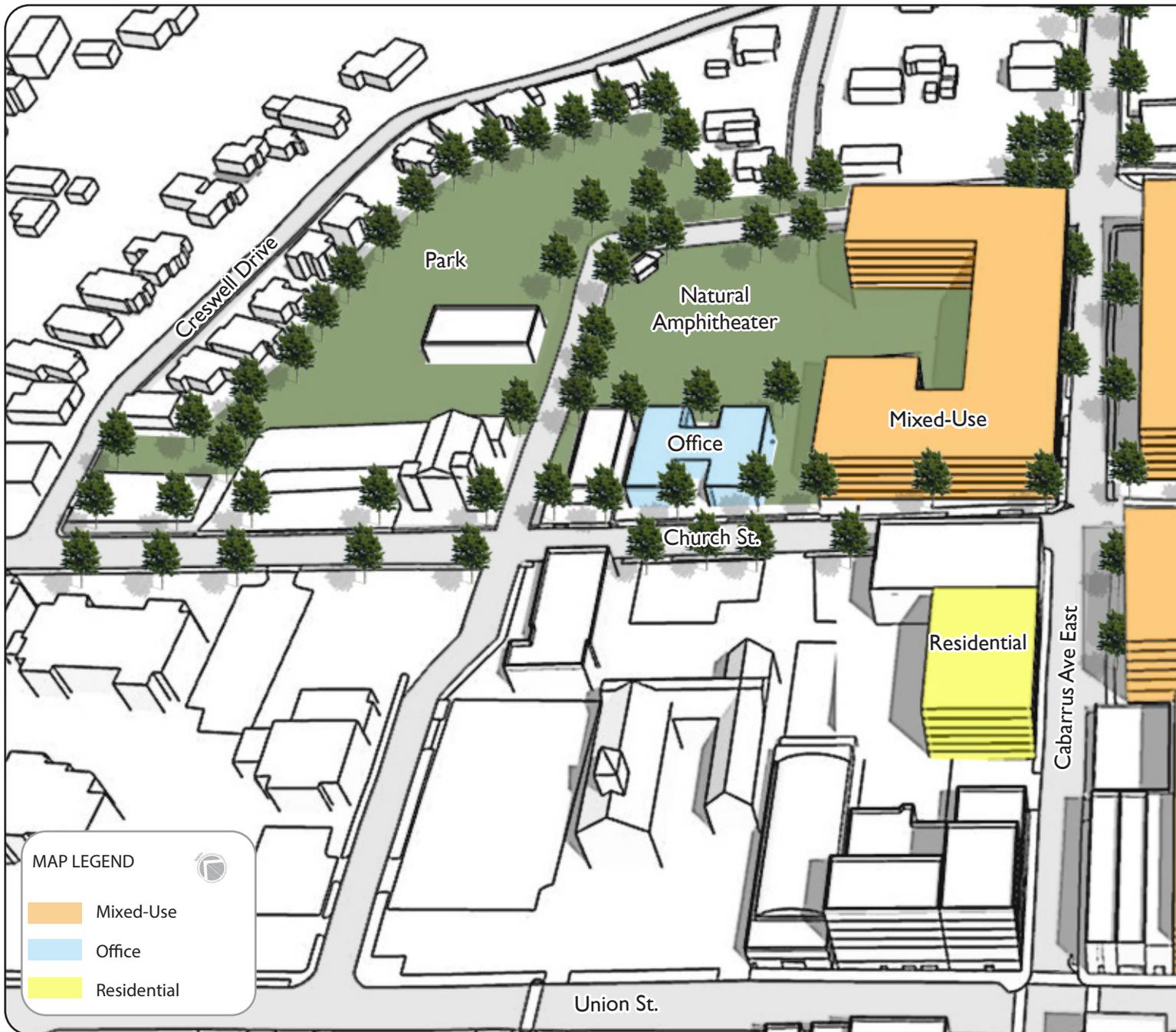




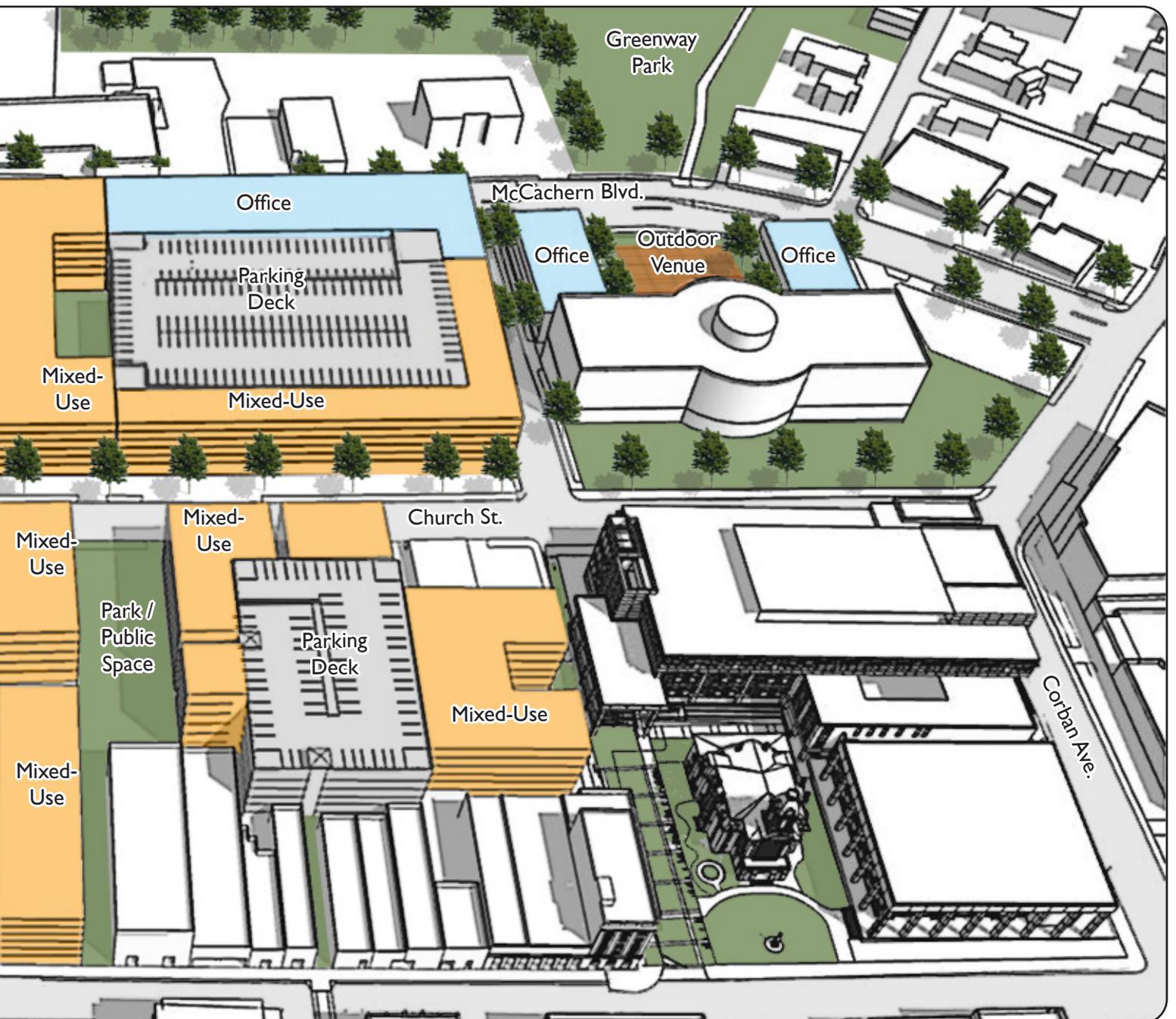
OVERALL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

CHURCH STREET REDEVELOPMENT

The Church Street corridor presents a number of opportunity sites for redevelopment along the east and west sides of Church Street between Creswell Drive NE and Corban Ave SE at the Cabarrus County Governmental Center. The major catalysts in these areas include public sector investments in the construction of new parking, streetscapes, and public spaces to leverage private sector investments in mixed-use projects to meet the projected market demand. One of the proposed parking structures is on the western side of Church Street in the general location of the existing Bicentennial Plaza parking area, primarily on City-owned land. This new parking deck would serve new development within the entire block, including a new apartment building across Cabarrus Avenue East located between The View at Hotel Concord and Lofts 29. The image below displays one option for the redevelopment of the western side of Church Street with the parking deck and public space serving as the primary catalysts. The redevelopment of the former Belk Building is displayed in each of these options as mixed-use new construction.



On the eastern side of Church Street, a series of new development is proposed to be served by a parking deck in the center of the block, primarily located on a County-owned parcel of land. The option below displays how the entire block could be redeveloped in the future. The surrounding development would include a mixture of commercial on the ground floors, with residential above, including an office building along McCachern Boulevard SE. In addition to the potential development in that block, a new mixed-use building across Cabarrus Avenue East, and a new office building on Church Street could be constructed to take advantage of the new parking facility as well. This block is also covered later in the Public Parks and Public Spaces section describing the establishment of "Gold Mine Park." Behind the County Governmental Complex on the existing Post Office site, an outdoor venue, which is described later, is surrounded by office space, providing needed public space and potential expansion of the County offices. Additional conceptual redevelopment options for Church Street are displayed on the following pages.



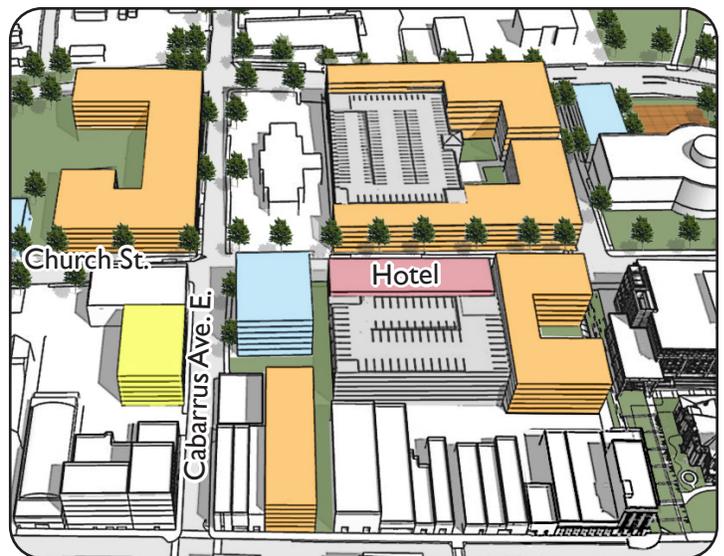
CONCEPTUAL REDEVELOPMENT OF THE WEST SIDE AND EAST SIDE OF CHURCH STREET

As part of the conceptual development process, several alternatives were proposed for the eastern and western side of Church Street. In the first option to the right for the eastern side of Church Street, the Fifth Third Bank site and the County-owned site are redeveloped with the remainder of the site unchanged. This option would only require two property owners to work together in the redevelopment (Fifth Third Bank and the County). On the western side of Church Street, the Bicentennial Plaza is developed with a larger public space. The redevelopment of the lot between What-a-burger and 57 Union is displayed as fully developed with a mixed-use building. An additional connection is made to Union Street adjacent to the proposed redevelopment of the former Belk Building.



FIFTH THIRD SITE REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

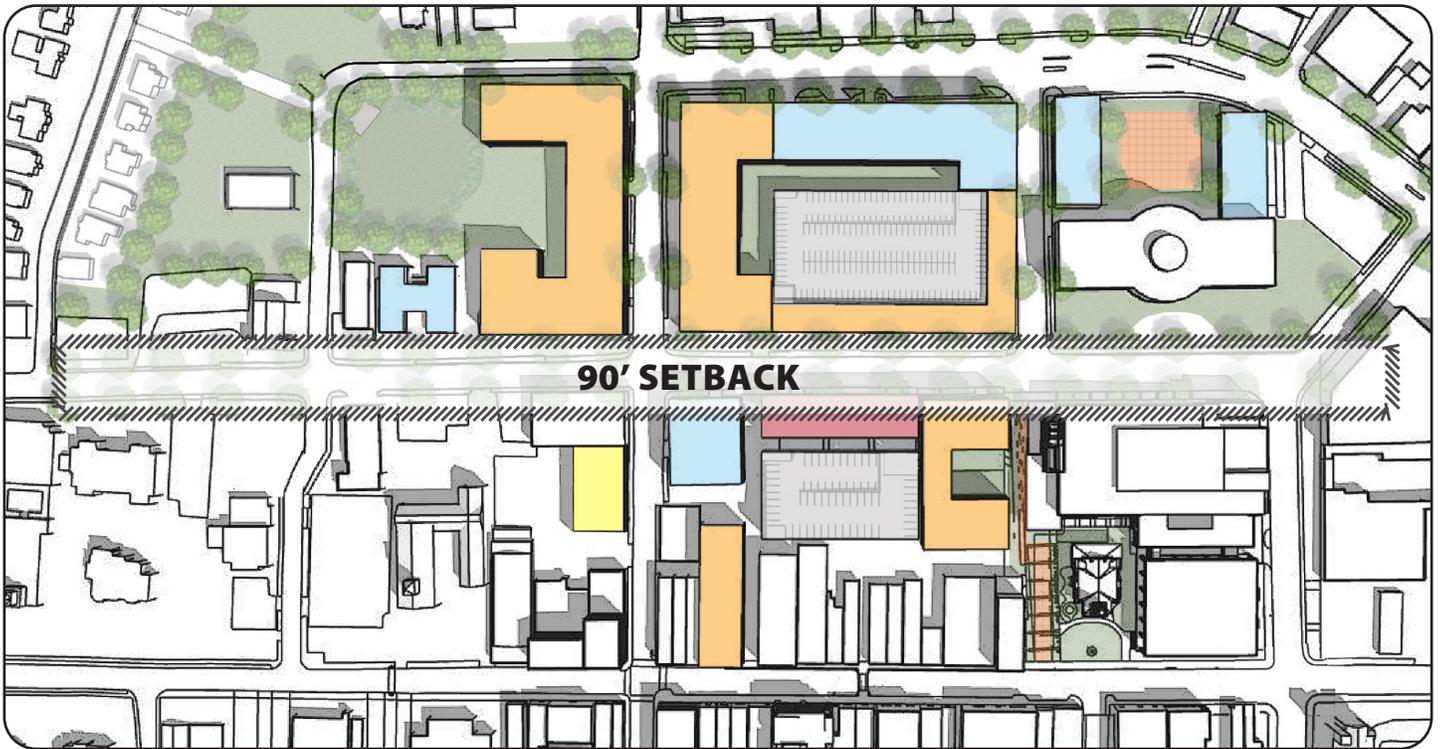
A third option focused on redeveloping the properties from the County-owned parking lot to Means Avenue on the eastern side of Church Street. As with all options, this option is dependent upon the public sector constructing a parking deck for the general public and to leverage further private sector investment in downtown. For the western side of Church Street in this third option, a potential hotel is envisioned to demonstrate how overnight lodging opportunities in downtown can be accommodated. This option includes a strong alley pedestrian link from Church Street to Union Street. This option, as with the first option displayed on the previous page, provides enough parking to help leverage investment in a new apartment building between The View at Hotel Concord and Lofts 29 across Cabarrus Avenue East.



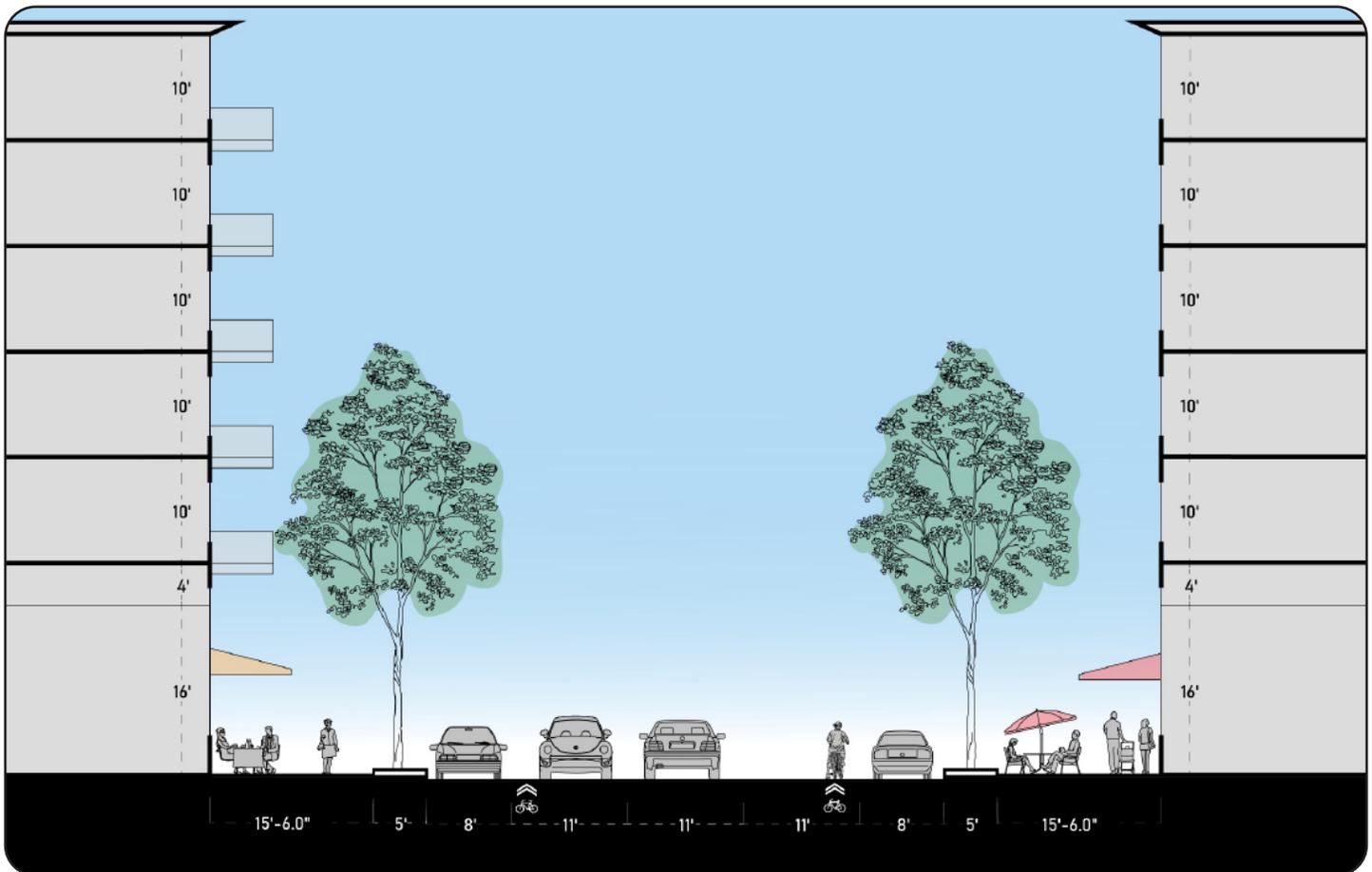
POTENTIAL HOTEL SITE & REDEVELOPMENT ON MEANS

CHURCH STREET BUILDING SETBACKS

As the Church Street corridor is redeveloped over time, an opportunity exists to transform the streetscape by increasing the building setback for new construction. Church Street has enough room to expand the right-of-way to 90 feet. This expansion can be accomplished by requiring deeper setbacks for new development, allowing for a new streetscape to be constructed. The new 90 foot right-of-way will create space for wider sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking, establishing an outdoor space for new residents and visitors to enjoy while experiencing downtown. As seen in the image on the following page, outdoor dining can help activate the street, expanding the footprint of the downtown experience. Church Street will become a new urban boulevard, helping to support walkability, economic expansion, and greater enjoyment of downtown Concord.



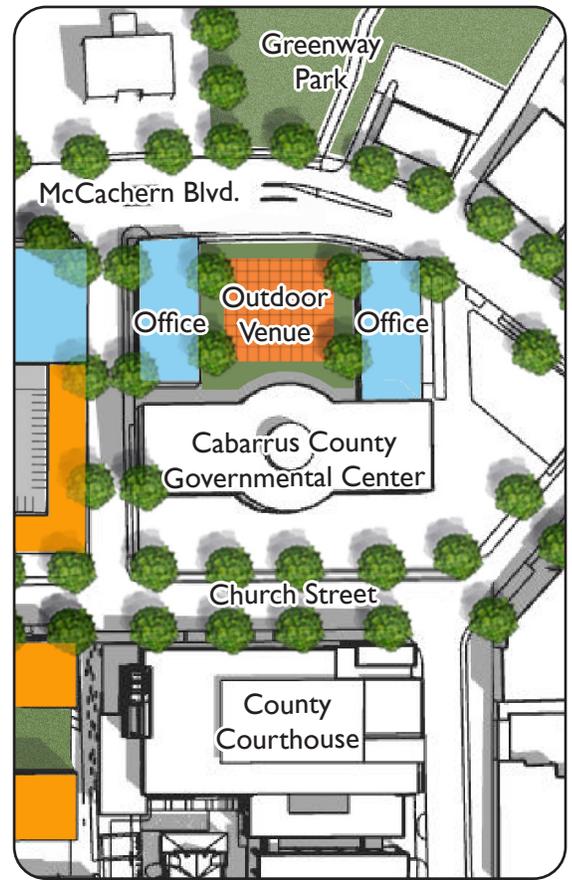
PROPOSED SETBACK ALONG CHURCH STREET CORRIDOR



CHURCH STREET URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT

PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

During the 2016 Master Plan and 2021 Master Plan update, residents indicated they would like to have more parks and public spaces in downtown. As part of the process, two sites were identified within the areas proposed for new development on the western side of Church Street. A potential site was also identified on the eastern side of Church Street in connection with the Bicentennial Plaza as displayed on the previous pages. The outdoor venue and greenway park helps form a stronger connection between the greenway and downtown, creating an opportunity for the potential closing of McCachern Boulevard for major events that may spill over into the street connecting the spaces. An example of this type of urban space is found in Rock Hill, South Carolina, where the new City Hall was built around an outdoor venue that is activated for concerts, serving as public space for office workers and downtown residents when the site is not activated for events. This example would provide the opportunity for the County to expand its Governmental Complex and office space, while the City could activate the outdoor venue and public space. The Greenway Park also provides an opportunity for small businesses to lease space for the provision of outdoor adventure opportunities such as a zip line. The steep terrain within the park makes it an ideal location for a number of outdoor adventure venues. Finally, as part of the cross-town connector outlined later in the Plan, a greenway link would be installed along one side of Means Avenue to connect with the new Means Plaza and Union Streetscape downtown.



OUTDOOR VENUE CONCEPT

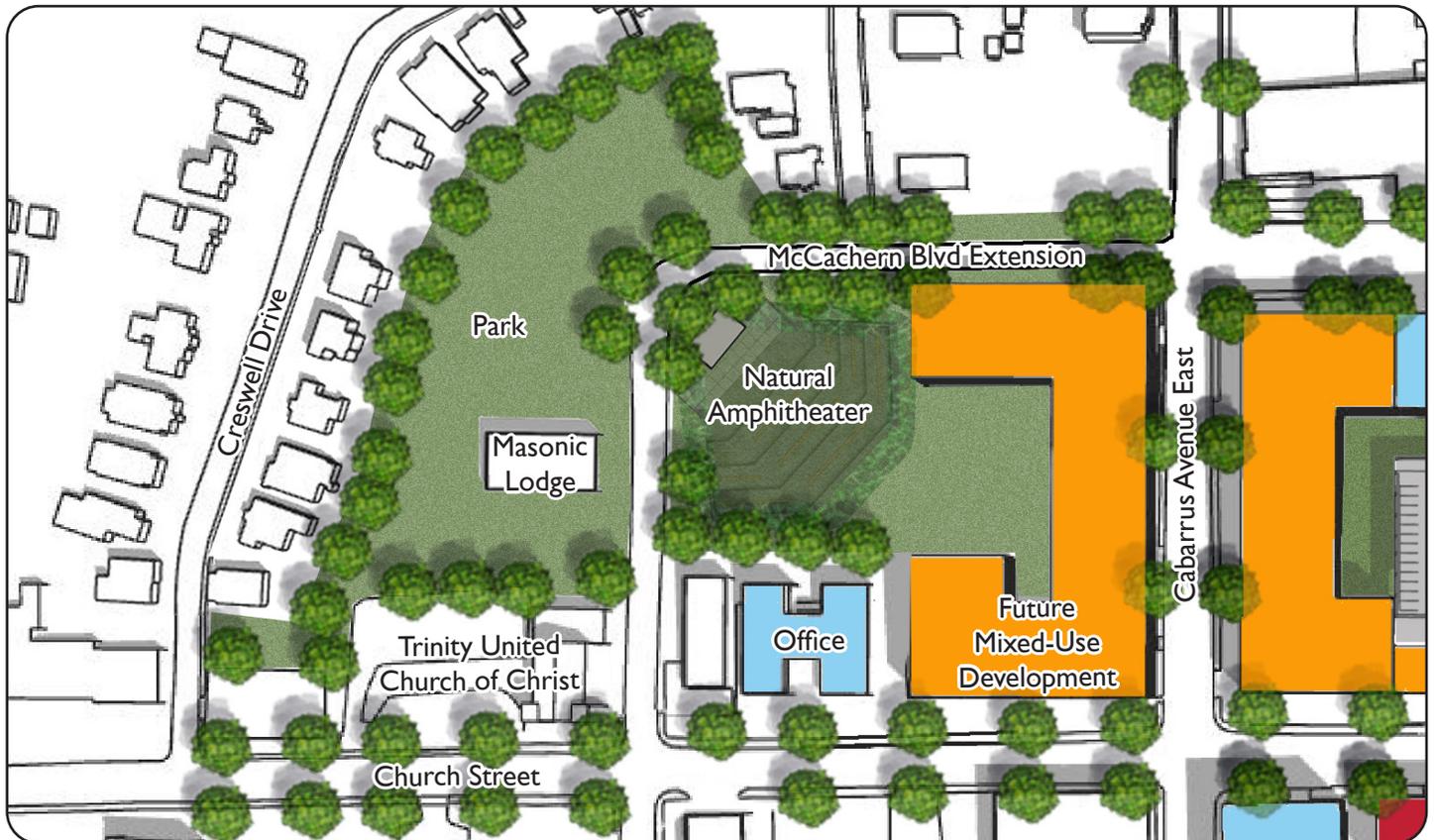


GREENWAY ZIP LINE - BOSTON, MA



CITY HALL AND OUTDOOR VENUE - ROCK HILL, SC

An almost 3 acre potential park site is located off Brumley Avenue behind Church Street and Cabarrus Avenue East. This area is the location of Concord's historic gold mine and the site of Masonic Temple Stokes Lodge 32. The current site could be transformed into a public park and natural amphitheater to provide outdoor recreation and entertainment opportunities for the surrounding neighborhood and downtown residents and visitors. To create the park site, Brumley Avenue would end in a cul-de-sac or be connected to an extension of McChachern Boulevard across Cabarrus Avenue East, which could potential relieve traffic congestion by providing an additional way for traffic to move around downtown. If a development agreement or public-private partnership is reached with the Masonic Temple, the building could continue in its current use and/or become a community focused resource for a variety of activities and programs to support residents of all ages in and around downtown.



NATURAL AMPHITHEATER AND GOLD MINE PARK CONCEPT



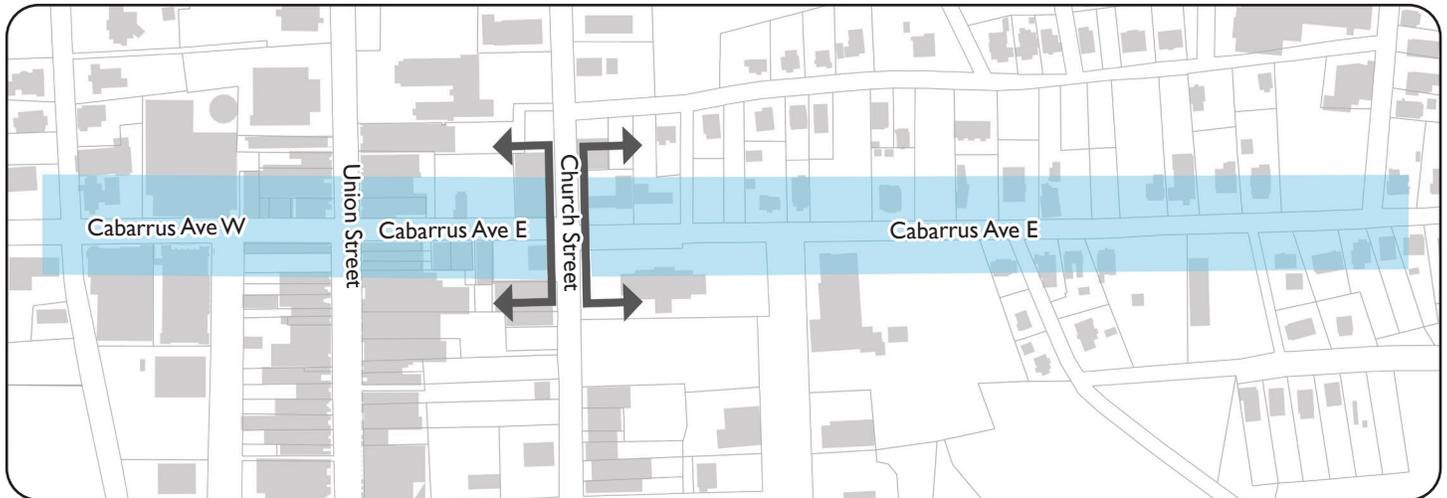
EXAMPLE OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATER



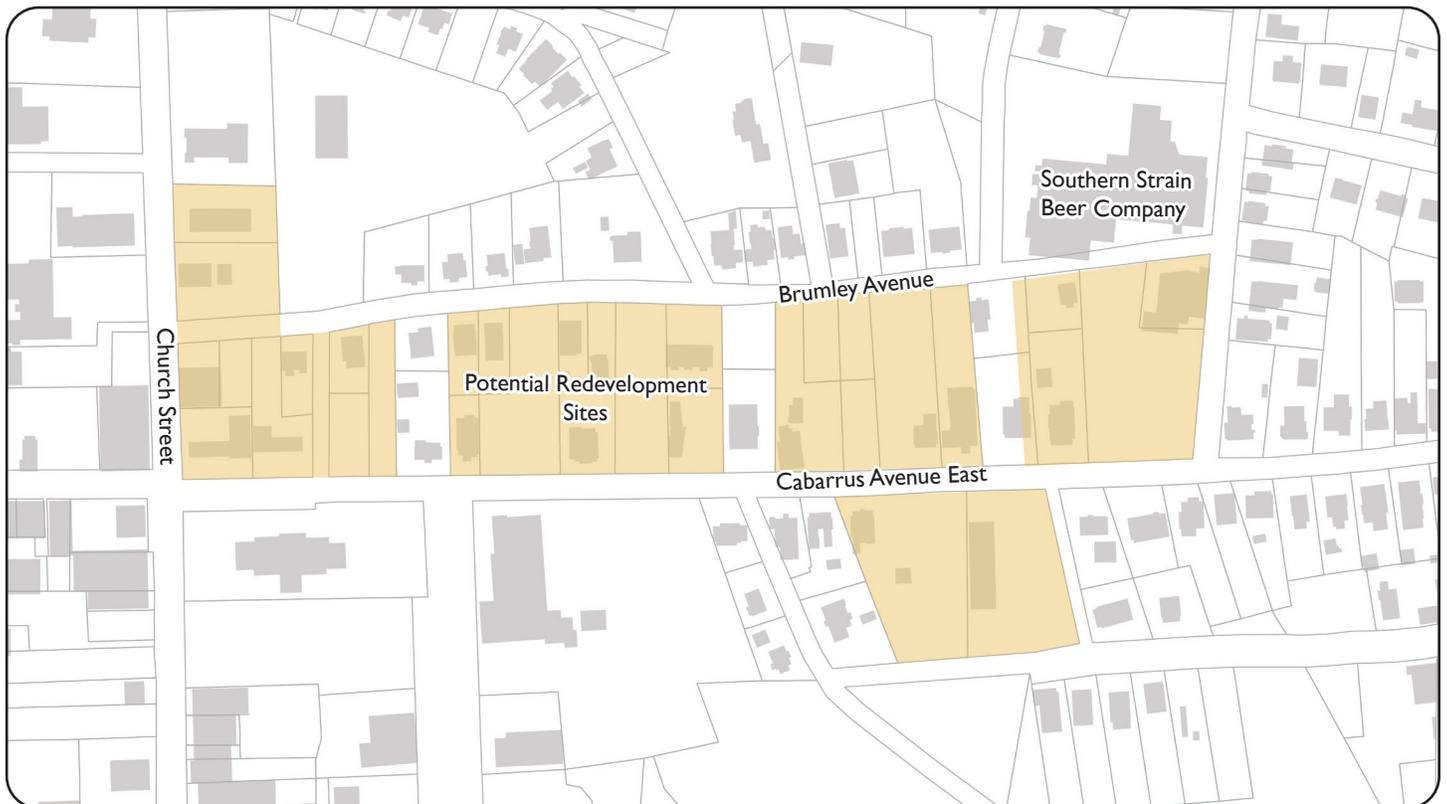
EXAMPLE OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATER

CABARRUS AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS

Cabarrus Avenue has several distinctive segments, which include the portion of the corridor east of Church Street and the segment west of Church Street to Spring Street. The corridor heading east is much wider and presents an opportunity for increased setbacks as new development is approved and constructed, which will make way for a new streetscape with wider sidewalks, street trees, more pedestrian scale lighting, and multi-modal transportation opportunities. The corridor is anchored on the east by Southern Strain Beer Company and proposed new development at the intersection with Reed Street. The entire Cabarrus Avenue East corridor from Church Street to Reed Street has multiple opportunities for high density residential redevelopment and creating a streetscape that strengthens this area's connection to downtown. These improvements along with the plans for the Church Street corridor will help expand the footprint and influence of downtown, growing the local economic base.



CABARRUS AVENUE CORRIDOR

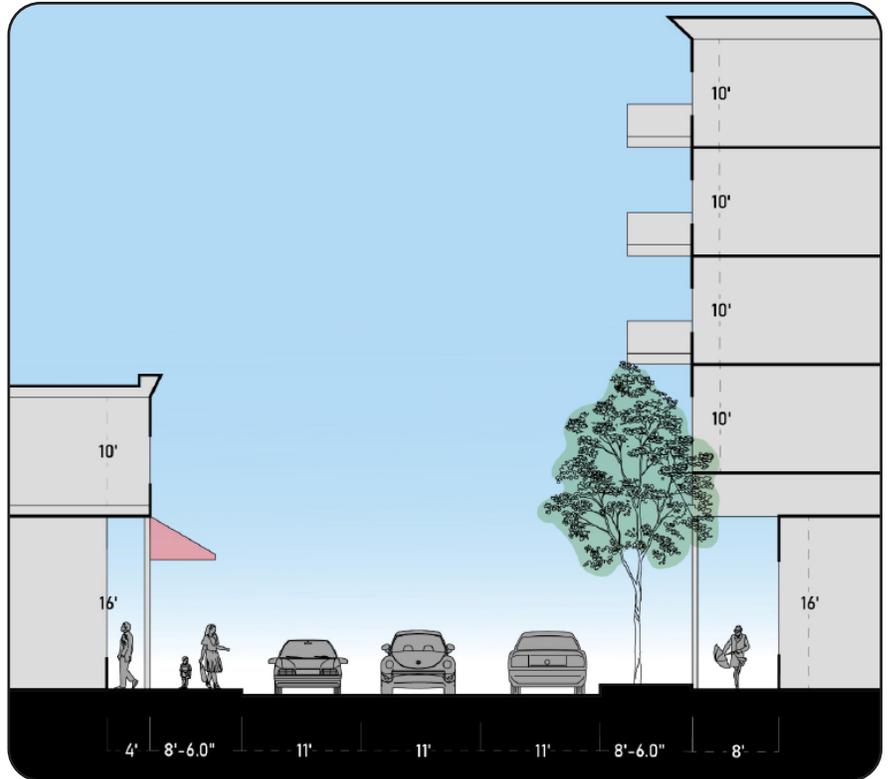


CABARRUS AVENUE EAST REDEVELOPMENT SITES

Cabarrus Avenue west of Church Street is much more constrained by the existing historic building footprints. A different urban design approach is needed to create wider sidewalks and a more pedestrian friendly downtown environment. The street widths in this area further complicate opportunities to expand the sidewalks. When coupled together, the narrow streets and existing building setbacks create very tight turning radii for larger vehicles, so much so, that Lofts 29 has a metal corner reinforcement beam installed to guard against large vehicles making a right hand turn from Church Street on to Cabarrus Avenue toward Union Street. In addition, NCDOT required low profile awning installation methods on the front of the Lofts 29 building. For this segment of Cabarrus Avenue, as seen in the figure below, an arcade concept will help create additional room for wider sidewalks by requiring the first floor to be setback further than the upper stories creating an arcade over the sidewalk. This move will allow for wider sidewalks to be constructed over a long period of time as buildings are renovated or reconstructed.



LOFTS 29 BUILDING CORNER



CABARRUS AVENUE CONCEPT BETWEEN MARKET & UNION STREETS



CABARRUS AVENUE WEST FROM MARKET STREET LOOKING TOWARD UNION STREET

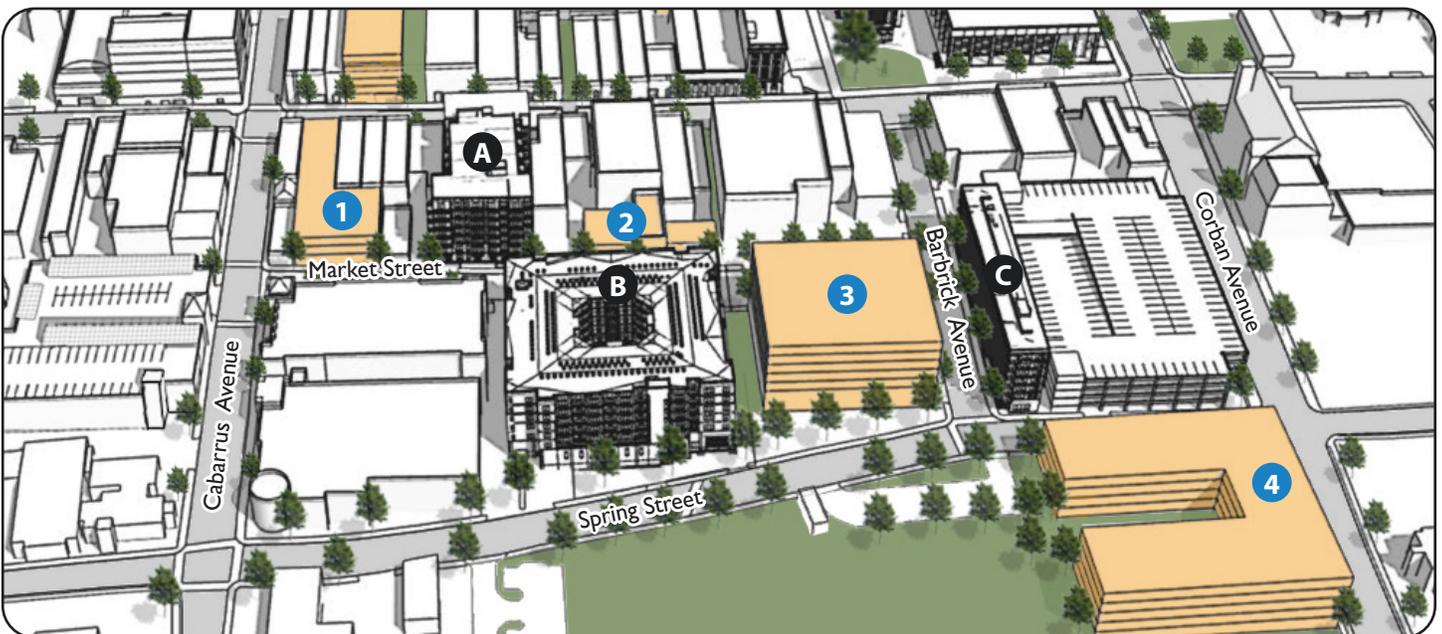
MARKET AND SPRING STREETS

Market Street and Spring Street present opportunities for improving the form and function of downtown Concord. Since the 2016 Master Plan, new businesses have opened along Market Street, and new major residential developments are being constructed. The Novi Rise and Novi Lofts will have frontage on Market Street, while Novi Flats will provide a terminating vista to the southern end of Market Street. It is important for Market Street, like proposals for Cabarrus Avenue and Church Street to be redesigned to include wider sidewalks, on-street parking, multi-modal facilities and trees to create a welcoming outdoor and pedestrian area to serve the new downtown residents and visitors alike. It is expected that Market Street will become the next major retail and entertainment street in downtown.

In addition to the streetscape enhancements for Market Street, two major opportunity sites for redevelopment exist on Spring Street. The first major site is located at 45 Spring Street and is the current location of Concord Engineering and Surveying, Inc (CESI). This lot also has frontage on Barbrick Avenue and Market Street. This site has the opportunity to develop into a mixed-use commercial, office and residential building, helping to activate the street life on each of the street frontages.

The small commercial plaza located at 74 Spring Street that also has frontage along Corban Avenue is another site that is prime for redeveloping into a similar mixed-use development as described for the 45 Spring Street site. Although each site can potential include some on-site parking, a centralized parking structure in close proximity will most likely be necessary to leverage the full development potential of both sites. A potential site along Corban next to the property at 74 Spring Street was identified as a potential long term site for a new parking deck.

Although its primary street address is 4 Union Street, this currently vacant lot has the opportunity to become an infill mixed-use building with a significant amount of developable space in the rear fronting Market Street. The development of this site will help create additional street frontage and encourage additional infill development, such as the recently opened Mac Tabby Cat Cafe fronting Market Street.



OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 4 Union Street Vacant Lot
- 2 Example Infill Sites
- 3 45 Spring Street (CESI)
- 4 74 Spring Street (Shopping Plaza)

PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- A Novi Lofts
- B Novi Rise
- C Novi Flats



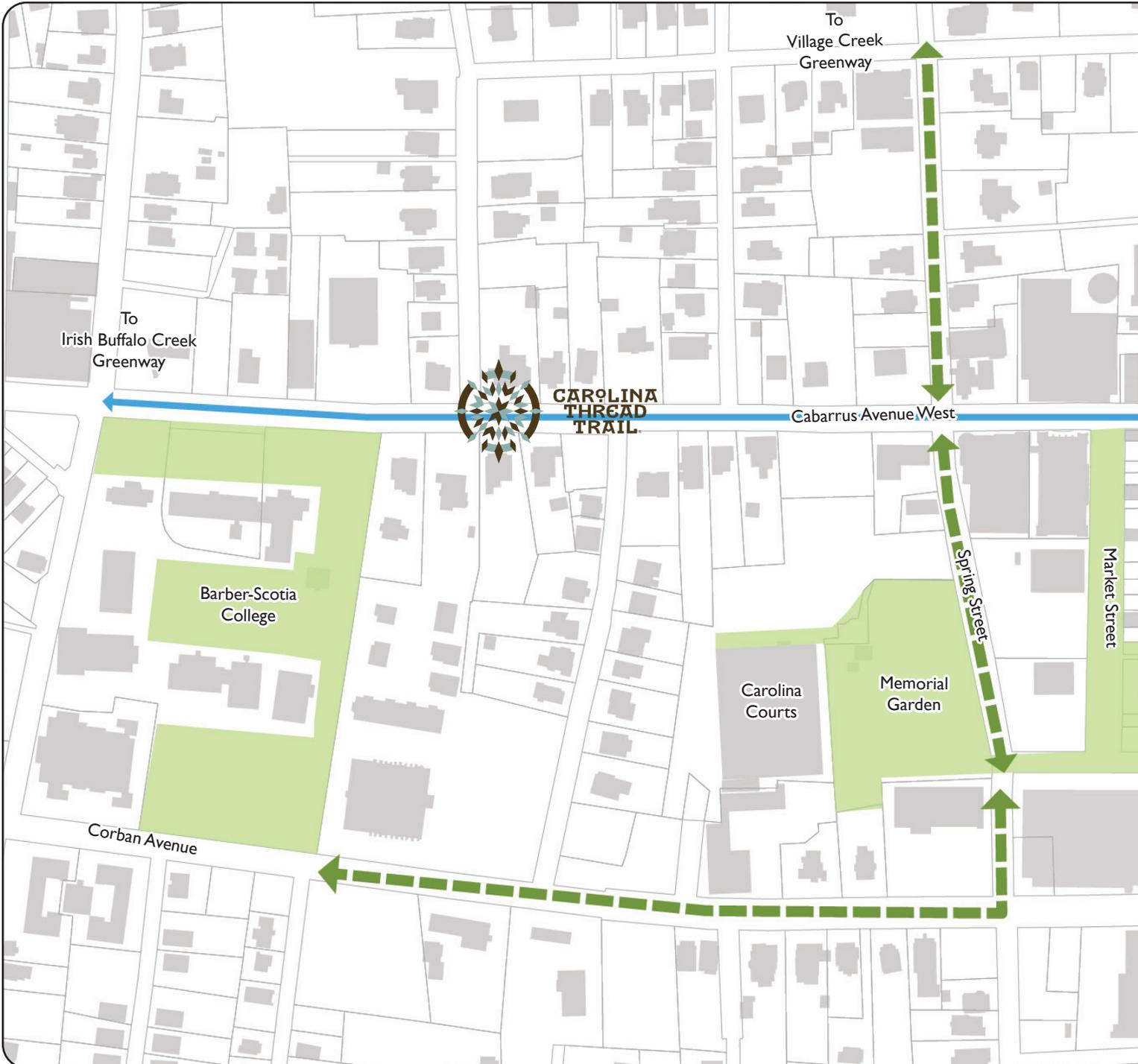
EXISTING VIEW ALONG MARKET STREET



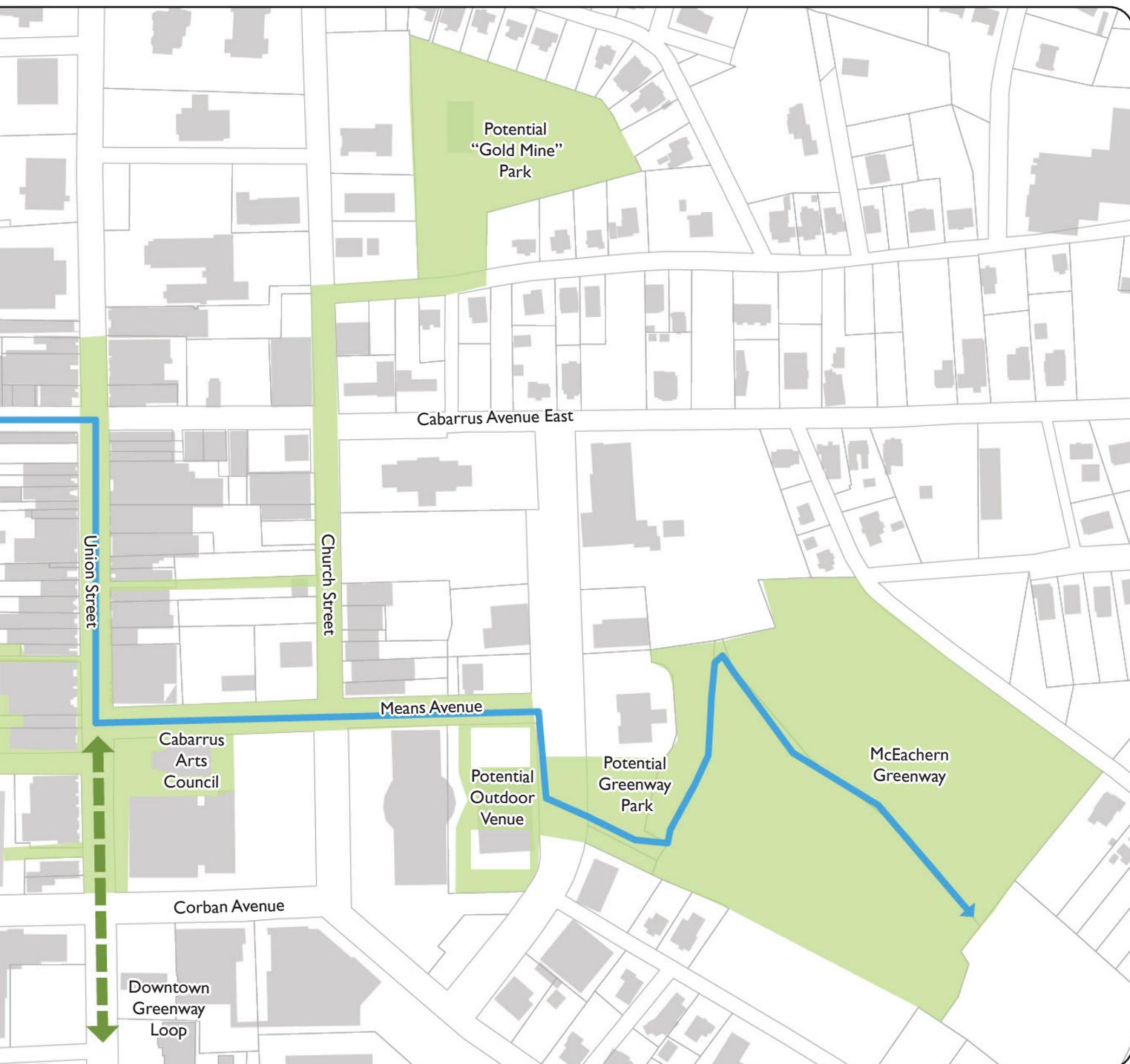
RENDERING OF NOVI RISE AND STREETScape ON MARKET

CROSS-TOWN CONNECTOR

In addition to the many residential and commercial development opportunities in downtown, there is an opportunity to connect surrounding areas through the heart of downtown Concord. The map below demonstrates how a potential cross-town connector can make its way through downtown from east to west and north to south along existing trails and sidewalks. The primary trail connecting through downtown is the Carolina Thread Trail route displayed in blue on the map below. Concord is a partner of this regional trail effort with planned routes through the city including the identified route below. The Carolina Thread Trail connects through downtown from McEachern Greenway up Union



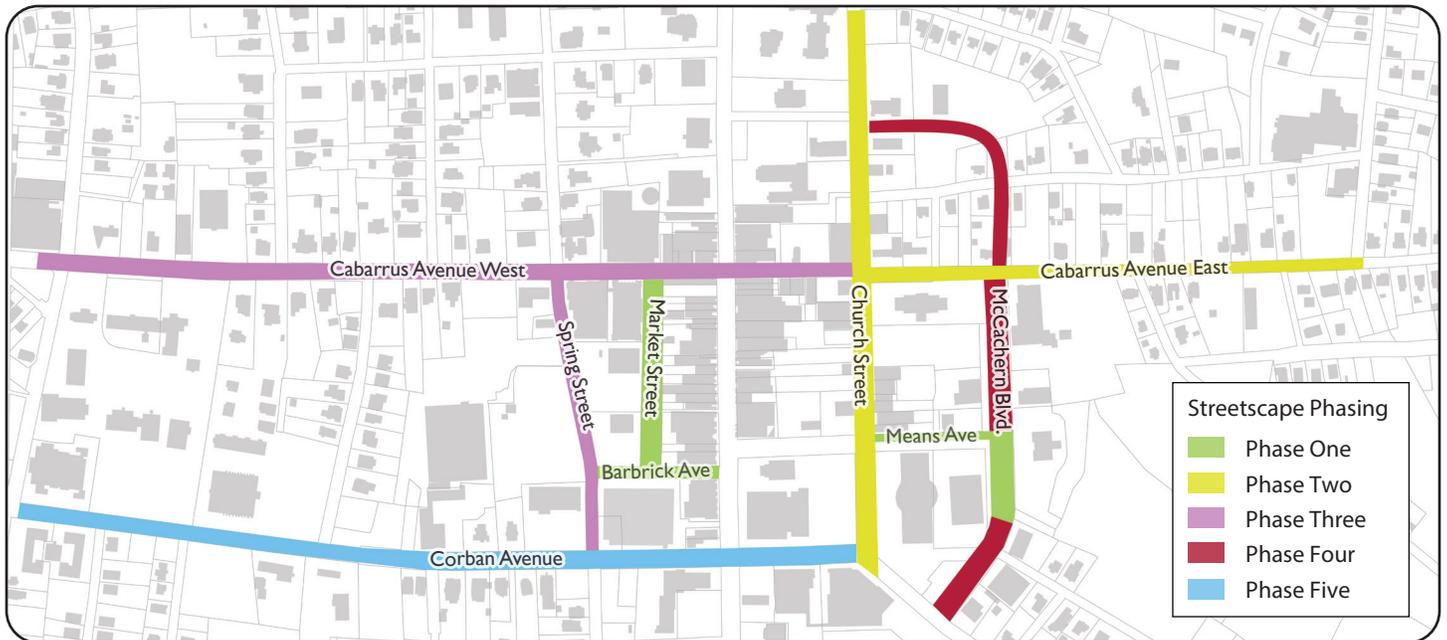
Street and out Cabarrus Avenue West to connect with Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway. A greenway trail connection can be made along Spring Street to the Village Greenway as well. The greenway trails and sidewalks also connect to existing and planned destinations as identified. Foot traffic in downtown will increase by connecting these public parks and public spaces with pedestrian routes. Expanding this pedestrian network also creates the opportunity for the growing population in downtown to walk as part of their daily routines and for recreational enjoyment.



PEDESTRIAN, PARKS, DESTINATIONS, AND GREENWAY CONNECTIONS

STREETSCAPE PHASING

As construction dominates downtown over the next year, now is the best time to establish a streetscape design and phasing plan. It will be important to develop a firm vision for the streetscape improvements to ensure the appropriate setbacks and rights-of-way are preserved prior to new construction. Church Street and Cabarrus Avenue, although not part of Phase One, should undergo evaluation and planning now. Establishing the streetscape vision for these streets will make it possible for the City to improve the overall downtown street network for vehicles and pedestrians, installing wider sidewalks, on-street parking where applicable, and street trees to provide shade and an enhanced appearance.



STREETSCAPE PHASING



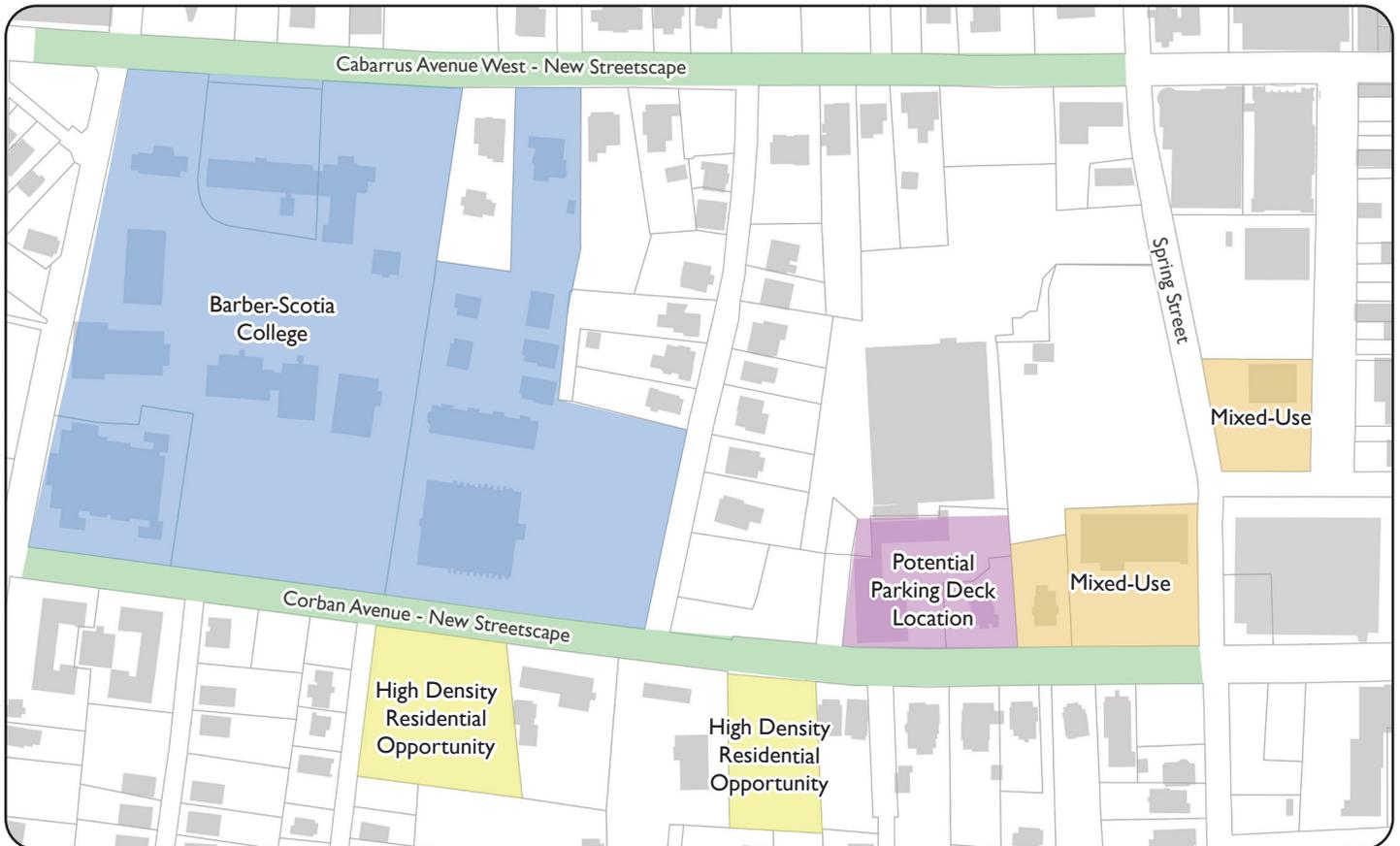
PHASE TWO AREA - CHURCH STREET



PHASE ONE AREA - MARKET STREET

LONG TERM OPPORTUNITIES (WESTERN EDGE)

The Master Plan for downtown also outlines longer term strategies and opportunities as downtown grows and changes. The long term opportunities will provide guidance on any major infrastructure or development decisions in close proximity to downtown. As areas around downtown grow and develop, these long term opportunities identified on the western edge of downtown should be coordinated with future development proposals and plans that are connected to downtown. As with the streetscape phasing and planning, more detailed plans should be considered now so that new development will be constructed in a manner that will allow the City to achieve its vision for these long term opportunities. In addition, the City is currently working with Barber-Scotia College to think about future opportunities and partnerships. Once this process is completed, the results may be incorporated into the Master Plan at that time.



LONG TERM OPPORTUNITIES

DESTINATION PLANNING

Downtown Concord is a destination for people throughout the City for dining, the Davis Theater, downtown events and festivals, government and courthouse business, shopping, the library and many other entertainment, retail, and civic activities. As the downtown continues to expand, there is a need to develop a strategy and plan for three primary areas. The three areas include, developing and funding a strategy to expand performances at the Davis Theater, preparing a “Destination Downtown Concord” tourism study and implementation plan, and the preparation of a restaurant and retail recruitment plan and strategy.

DAVIS THEATER

The Davis Theater is a key destination within the City of Concord, drawing people to the center of the community. In a typical year, the Davis Theater averages about 15 performances. The average attendance per show is 170 people. As part of the Master Plan updating process, discussions were held with the Cabarrus Arts Council to determine if there was an opportunity to expand performances at the Davis Theater to drive more economic development in the downtown area from visitors outside of Cabarrus County and to provide more entertainment opportunities for the new downtown residents that are coming to downtown over the next five years.

After conducting a very basic assessment with the Arts Council staff, it was determined that performances could be ramped up to 150 per year, drawing approximately 25,000 visitors to downtown Concord on an annual basis. The Arts Council would need to hire four and a half new staff positions to support this increase in performances. The staff positions would include additional contract employees for custodial services, security, and concessions. The estimated impact on the budget would be approximately \$305,000, which is significantly less than building a new performing arts center. Funding sources to help pay for this increase could include additional sponsorship opportunities, ticket and concession sales and expanded City and County support.

The Davis Theater could become a major economic driver for downtown if it expands its performance offerings. This expansion will provide residents the opportunity for more entertainment options within Cabarrus County for music, theater, comedy and other performances. In addition, there will be more opportunity to draw visitors into Cabarrus County and downtown from around the region. The expansion also creates more potential customers for downtown dining and retail establishments before and after performances, creating an expanded revenue source for local businesses. The expansion would provide additional jobs, although small in number, for residents as well.

As estimated by the Arts and Economic Prosperity®, the average attendee to venues similar to the Davis Theater spend an average of \$31.47 beyond ticket sales the night of the performance or event. The projected attendance increase to 25,000 annual visitors represents a potential \$787,000 economic impact.



DAVIS THEATER CROWD APPLAUDS



LIVE MUSIC PERFORMANCE AT THE DAVIS THEATER

DESTINATION DOWNTOWN CONCORD

A comprehensive study of the existing and future destination development opportunities for downtown will help identify existing resources that may need better market positioning and new opportunities for the development of new destinations in downtown. At the time of the preparation of this Master Plan update, a public art master plan was underway. This can be included as part of the destination study by helping to identify public art and historic displays. Local artist can be identified to participate in these initiatives, contributing to telling Concord's story and creating destinations. Historic events and people can also be an important part of the process, highlighting historic figures, African American history, important buildings and sites, and other similar historic places in downtown. For example, the creation of the Gold Mine Park described earlier in the Parks and Public Spaces section. Identifying all of the existing and potential destinations will help reinforce connections to local business as these destinations are marketed together.



RECENT DOWNTOWN EVENT

RESTAURANT & RETAIL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

Once the new Union Street is opened up, and the construction of the new residential units are completed in downtown, there will be a significant demand for new retail and restaurant oriented businesses in downtown. It is important to begin developing a recruitment strategy now. The strategy should include a comprehensive inventory of existing businesses and restaurants, available offerings, available space (ground floor and upper story where appropriate), potential incentives (facade grants), and a vision for the desired types of businesses to be located in downtown. Once that is prepared, a recruitment strategy can be developed, identifying similar businesses within a short distance of Concord that may want to expand and a more outward reaching strategy with a prospectus / packet for interested entrepreneurs and operators of existing establishments in similar locations across the region. With a prospectus in hand of all that downtown Concord has to offer, property owners, and business and economic development leaders and staff can recruit the types of businesses that are preferred to be located in downtown.



BUSINESS ACTIVITY ON UNION STREET



RECENTLY COMPLETED MURAL IN DOWNTOWN



THE NEW CITY HALL CAN BE SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND WHERE NOVI LOFTS CONSTRUCTION IS UNDERWAY AT THE OLD CITY HALL SITE

IMPLEMENTATION

The public and private sector responded positively to the 2016 Downtown Master Plan, with the City and County moving forward with important projects that played a role in leveraging private sector investment by way of small- and large-scale projects throughout the downtown. Pictured at the bottom of the page are two examples of projects that were completed over the last five years. An example of a smaller infill development on Market Street is Mac Tabby Cat Cafe that fronts Market Street. The cafe activated the back-end of a building that has its primary frontage on Union Street, maximizing the economic potential for the property and generating foot traffic and activity on Market Street. The View at Hotel Concord, which opened in December of 2017, was also fully rehabilitated with the assistance of historic tax credits by Rehab Development, Inc., and includes 40 market-rate residential units and several small businesses. The hotel Concord also includes a grand ballroom with an occupancy of 499 guests, providing an estimated annual economic impact of \$750,000 to the community. As noted in the beginning, over \$15 million was invested by the public sector, leveraging \$32 million in private sector projects in downtown. With over \$205 million currently being invested in downtown over the next five years by the public sector and private sector, the urban fabric of downtown Concord will continue to change. As with the 2016 Downtown Master Plan, this update also includes an implementation matrix by year through 2026 to implement the plan. A total of 77 implementation strategies were developed for the next five years and are organized by the five planning themes listed below.

- **Move & Park** - providing accessibility to all modes of travel, clear wayfinding and efficient, well-managed parking systems;
- **Live & Work** - attracting new housing and employment opportunities;
- **Play & Stay** - attracting new visitors, developing entertainment destinations, becoming everyone’s second neighborhood;
- **Show & Tell** - telling downtown Concord’s story well, showing off the changes in downtown, delivering a great downtown experience; and
- **Policy & Program** - enabling the downtown vision through a strategic development framework.



INFILL ON MARKET STREET (MAC TABBY CAT CAFE)



HOTEL CONCORD FULLY REDEVELOPED AND OPEN

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGIES	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023
<p>MOVE & PARK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a detailed and far-reaching construction mitigation plan for Union Street streetscape project. • Start the construction phase of the Union Street streetscape to include Barbrick improvements. • Encourage bicycle parking in future City, County, and private projects. • Look to assemble any additional land that is available adjacent to the current Bicentennial Lot - enough to support a new parking deck in this location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue an NCDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan grant to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and active living enhancements throughout the city with an intentional focus on downtown. • Begin preparing a detailed plan for improving the streetscape from the new Courthouse, across Church Street to Means Avenue SE, and across McCachern Blvd., connecting to the McCachern Downtown Greenway Connector. • Develop and implement a unified parking signage system.
<p>LIVE & WORK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the completion of the public-private partnership development projects underway. • Encourage small-scale infill on Market Street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore expansion of the MSD along Cabarrus Ave East from Church St to Reed St. • Work with property owners and developers to identify new residential and commercial opportunities along the Cabarrus Ave East corridor to Reed Street. • Pursue workforce housing opportunities. • Prepare a detailed inventory of all upper story development space within existing buildings in the downtown to assess constraints and opportunities for improved utilization. Create a redevelopment and marketing strategy for this space. • Improve greenway connections to adjacent residential and commercial development to improve options for people to walk downtown. • Develop a New Downtown Market Analysis as part of restaurant and retail recruitment plan.

FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	FY 2026+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the planning and design phase for Market Street streetscape improvements as the next restaurant/retail street. Set a detailed design standard that private developers can build as part of redevelopment projects. • Prepare gateway corridor improvement plan(s) for key entryways into downtown. • Evaluate future shared parking deck sites with the County to leverage additional private investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin planning and design phase for Cabarrus Avenue East streetscape improvements to Reed Street to connect uses that are expanding the downtown footprint. Set a detailed design standard that private developers can build as part of redevelopment projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the planning and design phase for Church Street streetscape improvements. Set a detailed design standard that private developers can build as part of redevelopment projects. • As part of the larger project to assemble land for Gold Mine Park, begin the planning phase for the extension of McCachern Blvd across Cabarrus Avenue, closing a portion of Brumley Avenue, connecting to Killarney Ave NE at Church Street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the planning and design phase for Cabarrus Avenue (west of) Church Street to Kerr St NW in coordination with recommendations from the gateway corridor planning process. Set a detailed design standard that private developers can build as part of redevelopment projects. • Prepare a new parking study. • Establish a funding plan to implement pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety improvement recommendations from the NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. • Establish funding priorities for implementing recommendations from the new parking study. • Begin the planning and design phase for streetscape improvements on McCachern Blvd from Corban to Cabarrus Ave. Set a detailed design standard that private developers can build as part of redevelopment projects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin making progress on identifying new public-private partnership opportunities for new residential and commercial projects in downtown with an emphasis on taking steps to assemble property in the Bicentennial lot area and for the Market Square Site. • Explore public-private partnership opportunities to create condominium/mixed-use development at the existing CESI site. • Identify potential sites and prepare plans for a downtown off-leash dog park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine public-private partnership opportunities to redevelop the corner of Spring Street and Corban Ave SW (shopping plaza) as a primarily residential development. • Examine potential redevelopment of County owned surface parking on Church Street (across from the Bicentennial parking area) for a mixed-use development and parking garage. • Explore opportunities to develop County office space on the current Post Office site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify public-private partnership opportunities on Church Street for the creation of mixed-use residential projects, including the development of a hotel. • Work closely with the private sector to develop mid-block residential on Cabarrus Avenue (behind Hotel Concord rear parking lot). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify public-private partnership opportunities for residential along Cabarrus Avenue West and begin developing strategies for acquisition and facilitating new development. • Identify public-private partnership opportunities for residential along Corban Avenue SW.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONTINUED)

STRATEGIES	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023
<p>PLAY & STAY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop engaging temporary entertainment opportunities for vacant property or buildings in downtown (Fr8Yard Example in Spartanburg, SC). • Strategize with Cabarrus County and other Partners to better utilize Rotary Square. • Prepare a strategic plan for public art and historical displays and markers in downtown (local artists, African American history, historic buildings and events, historical figures). • This strategy can be included as part of the destination downtown Concord Study planned for 2022-2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin discussions with owners of the Masonic Lodge to determine potential incorporation into Gold Mine Park. • Develop and fund a strategy to expand the number of performances and attendance at the Davis Theater. • Investigate opportunities for AirBNB and other owner rental options to encourage overnight stays in the downtown area. • Prepare a restaurant and retail recruitment plan and strategy to leverage the new residential developments and to market the improved Union Street as an outdoor dining destination.
<p>SHOW & TELL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a marketing plan to communicate with the public on the construction projects impacting downtown, continuing to identify strategies to keep the public engaged like the live cameras that are currently in place for people to monitor construction progress. • Begin developing a marketing plan and budget to welcome the community to the reopening of downtown Concord, to celebrate the new streetscape, new development projects, new courthouse and other improvement projects. • Continue active management and updating of the new downtown website. • Identify opportunities to share and present the updated master plan and provide a “downtown update” to as many community groups and organizations as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the first phase of the marketing campaign and reopening celebration, highlighting major renovations as completed. • Begin a place branding and market initiative that builds upon the new downtown environment.
<p>POLICY & PROGRAM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create graphics to easily illustrate development process for citizens and developers. • City to explore additional facade grant incentives along Union Street to encourage private building owners to improve their buildings prior to the completion of the new Union Street streetscape. • Develop a “Private Use of Public Space” manual and guidelines governing outdoor cafés, sidewalk sales, busking, vending and other potential uses for the wider sidewalks on Union Street. • Evaluate existing CDO Center City Standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage NCDOT on new right-of-way widths for Cabarrus Avenue and Church Street, followed by a more detailed set of guidelines in 2022-2023. • Begin the streetscape conceptual design phase for all downtown streets.

FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	FY 2026+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davis Theater to begin increasing the number of performances and attendance, drawing more visitors to downtown. • Prepare a destination downtown Concord study and implementation plan. • Examine the demand, development potential and land assembly strategy for a Bicentennial parking garage and liner building for a hotel and mixed-use development, soliciting developers to explore this potential development opportunity. • Explore creation of a local grocery store downtown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for small-scale community gardens/ pop-up garden. • Explore creation of a local food co-op downtown. • Explore the creation of culinary incubator space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement recommendations from the Destination Downtown Concord study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways to attract new destinations, festivals, and events, while strengthening existing downtown attractions and events. • Identify opportunities for pocket park or pop-up parklet.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the year-long celebration and activities to promote downtown to include a focused series of major events as the larger projects are completed. • Implement the recommendations from the place branding and marketing effort. • Begin the year-long celebration and activities to promote downtown to include a focused series of major events as the larger projects are completed. • Implement the recommendations from the place branding and marketing effort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin developing marketing plans and public outreach efforts for the next phase of public-private partnerships and improvement projects in downtown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify ways to celebrate success as new businesses open and development projects are completed. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop urban design guidelines and dimensional standards for Church Street and Cabarrus Avenue. This process can include the evaluation and inclusion of other downtown streets as applicable. • Incorporate streetscape concepts developed in 2022-2023 into urban design guidelines to encourage participation by the private sector in the completion of future streetscape improvement projects. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City to explore additional facade grant incentives for private building owners along streets that are under construction for a new streetscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Downtown Master Plan. • Develop urban design guidelines and development regulations as applicable to implement recommendations from the gateway corridor planning process.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY COUNCIL

William C. "Bill" Dusch, Mayor
Terry Crawford, Mayor Pro Tem
Andy Langford
W. Brian King
Ella Mae Small
JC McKenzie
Jennifer P. Hubbard
John Sweat, Jr.

CITY MANAGEMENT

Lloyd Payne, City Manager
Joshua Smith, Assistant City Manager
Pam Hinson, Assistant City Manager
LeDerick Blackburn, Assistant City Manager

PLANNING & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Steve Osborne, Director
Kaylee Caton, Design Manager
Joseph Beasley, Economic Development Manager
Johnson Bray, Downtown Development Manager
Holly Sloop, Downtown Development Specialist
Gerald Warren, Urban Planner

CITIZENS OF CONCORD

A special thanks to the many residents and business owners that participated during this process, helping shape the future of downtown.

PREPARED BY

Benchmark Planning
www.benchmarkplanning.com