



Master Plan Update

April 2026

Lumberton, NC Brownfield Assessment Grant

Terracon

April 30, 2026

Carolina Civic Center, 5:30-8PM



What is a Brownfield Property?

- “Abandoned, idled, or underused property where redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived environmental contamination.”
- A brownfields site is a property where actual or perceived environmental contamination complicates its expansion or redevelopment.
- Cleanup costs and risks deter potential developers and create a barrier to community revitalization and economic development.



Brownfield Examples

- Vacant Properties
- Abandoned Properties
- Dry Cleaners
- Former Gas Stations
- Landfills
- Illicit Dump Sites
- Industrial Properties
- Rail yards and adjacent facilities



What is an EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant?

- **Assessment Grants** provide funding for communities to:
 - Inventory sites
 - Characterize sites
 - Assess sites
 - Conduct redevelopment planning
 - Conduct cleanup planning
 - Provide community outreach
- The city of Lumberton was awarded an EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant for \$500,000 to assess sites across the community.



Environmental Site Assessments In Lumberton

Phase I ESA

- Inspection of property
- Interview of site owners and/or neighbors
- Review of environmental records
- Review of historical records

Are there RECs?



Phase II ESA

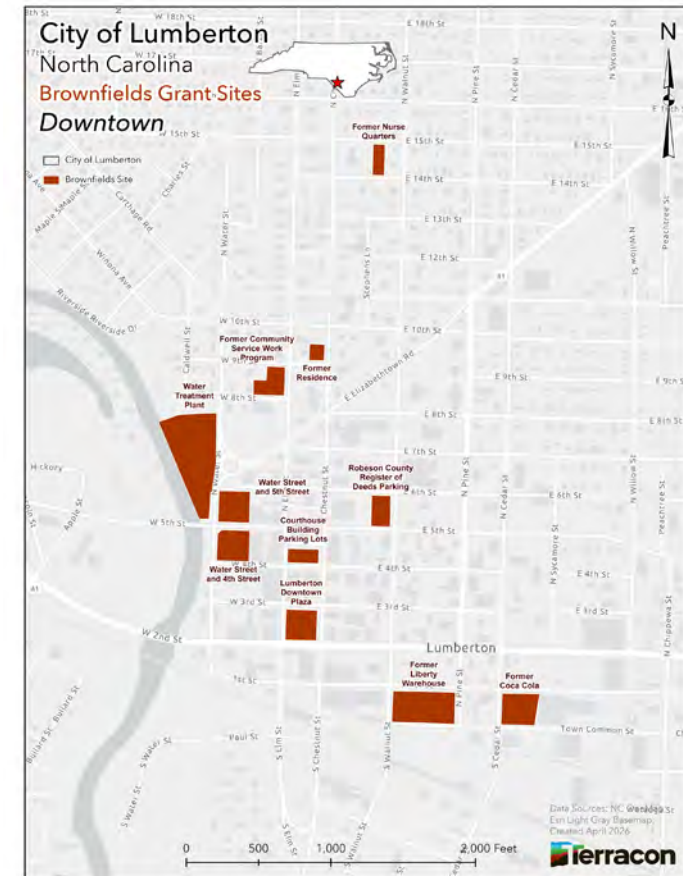
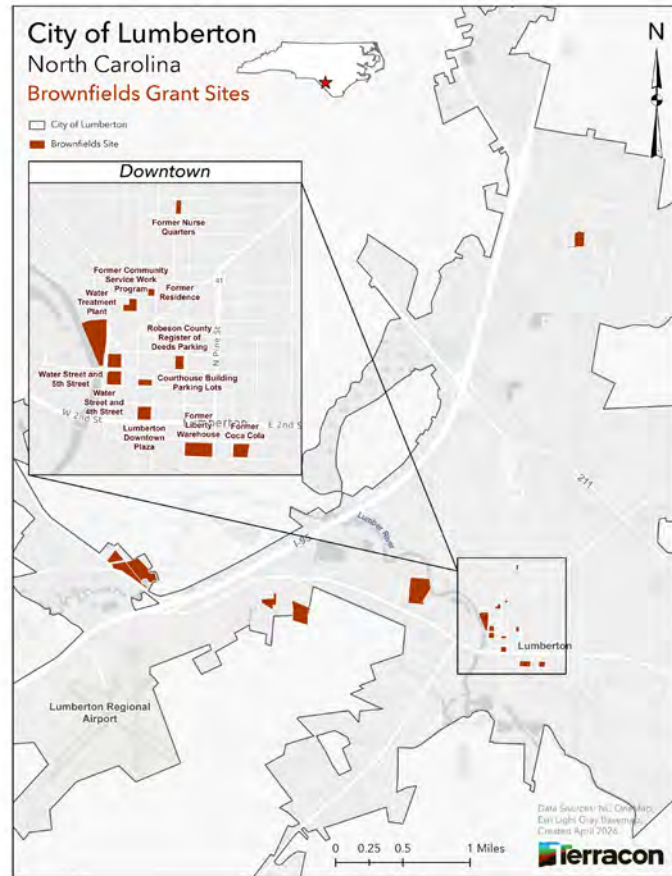
- Collection of samples from site
- Assessment to determine if site is contaminated
- Determine if suspected contaminants are present at concentrations above regulated levels.

Additional work that can be completed under the Assessment Grant



- Site Inventory
- Conduct Planning work
- Cleanup and Redevelopment Planning
- Conduct Community Involvement

Lumberton Sites



Thank you!

Questions?

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Master Plan Update

April 2026

Overview

- Identify Opportunities
- Identify Community Priorities
- Develop a Vision for Downtown
- Market Study
- Action Plan to Move Forward

Downtown
Assessment

Downtown
Workshops

Downtown
Master Plan



Market Study Area Geographies

▪ Regional

- Fayetteville and Florence Markets
- Wilmington (lesser extent)

▪ County

- Robeson County
- Primary Market Area

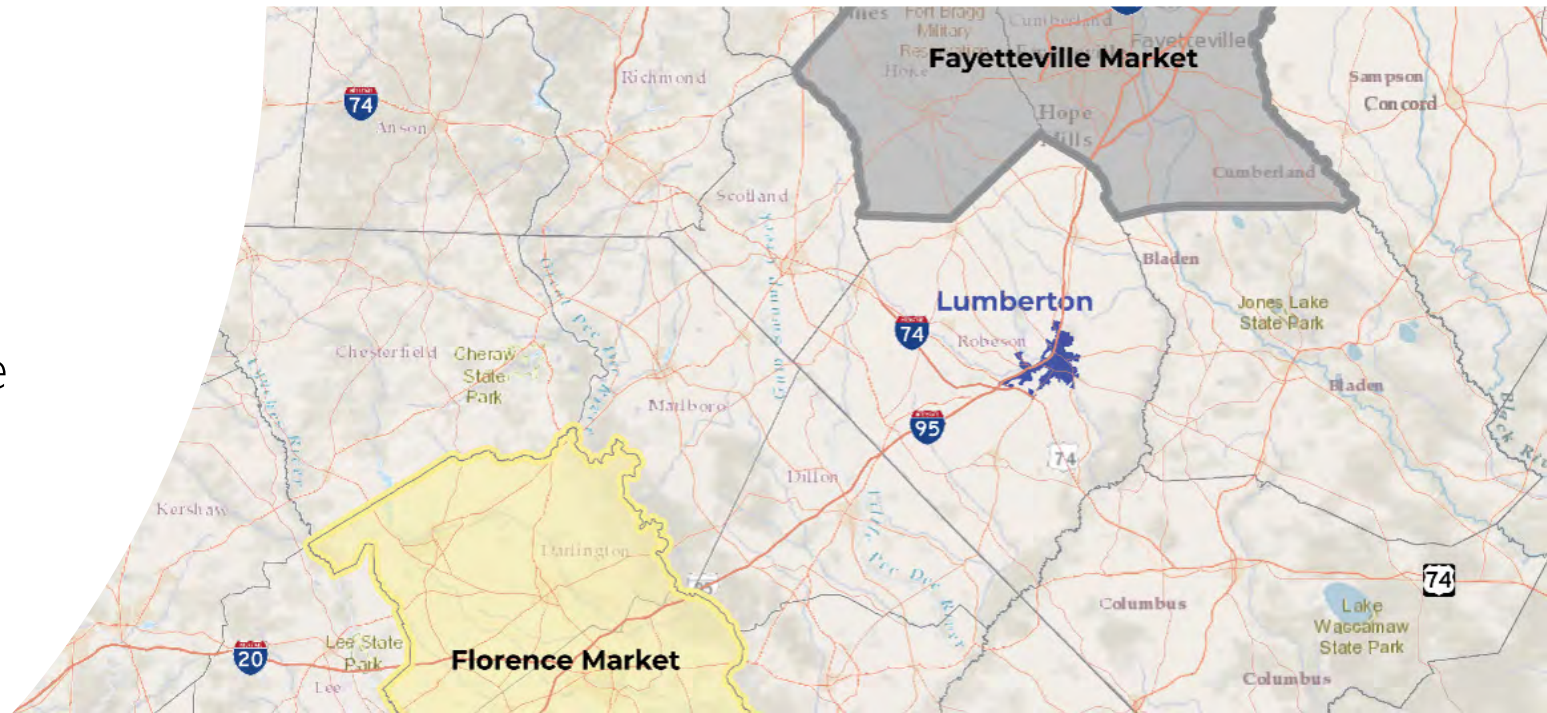
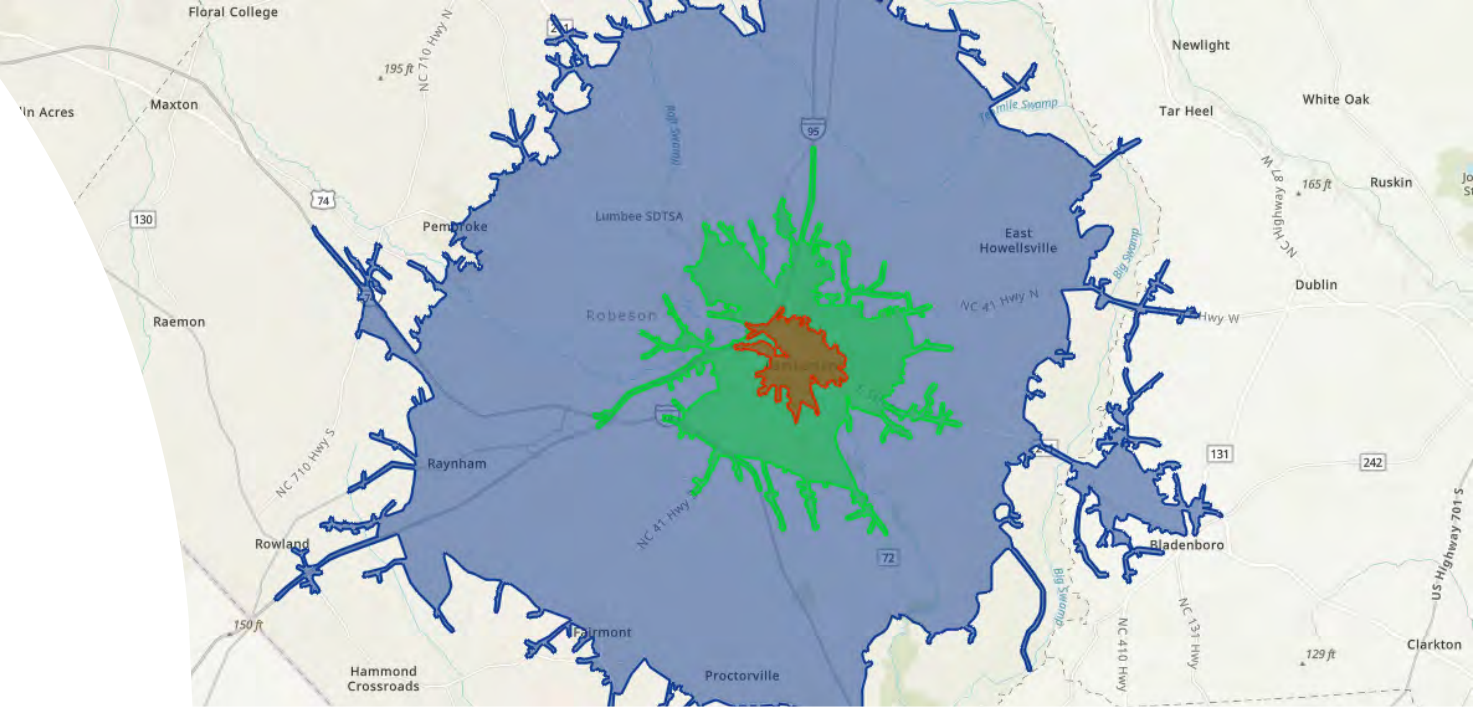
▪ City Limits

▪ Custom Area (Drive Times)

- 5, 10, 20 minutes from courthouse

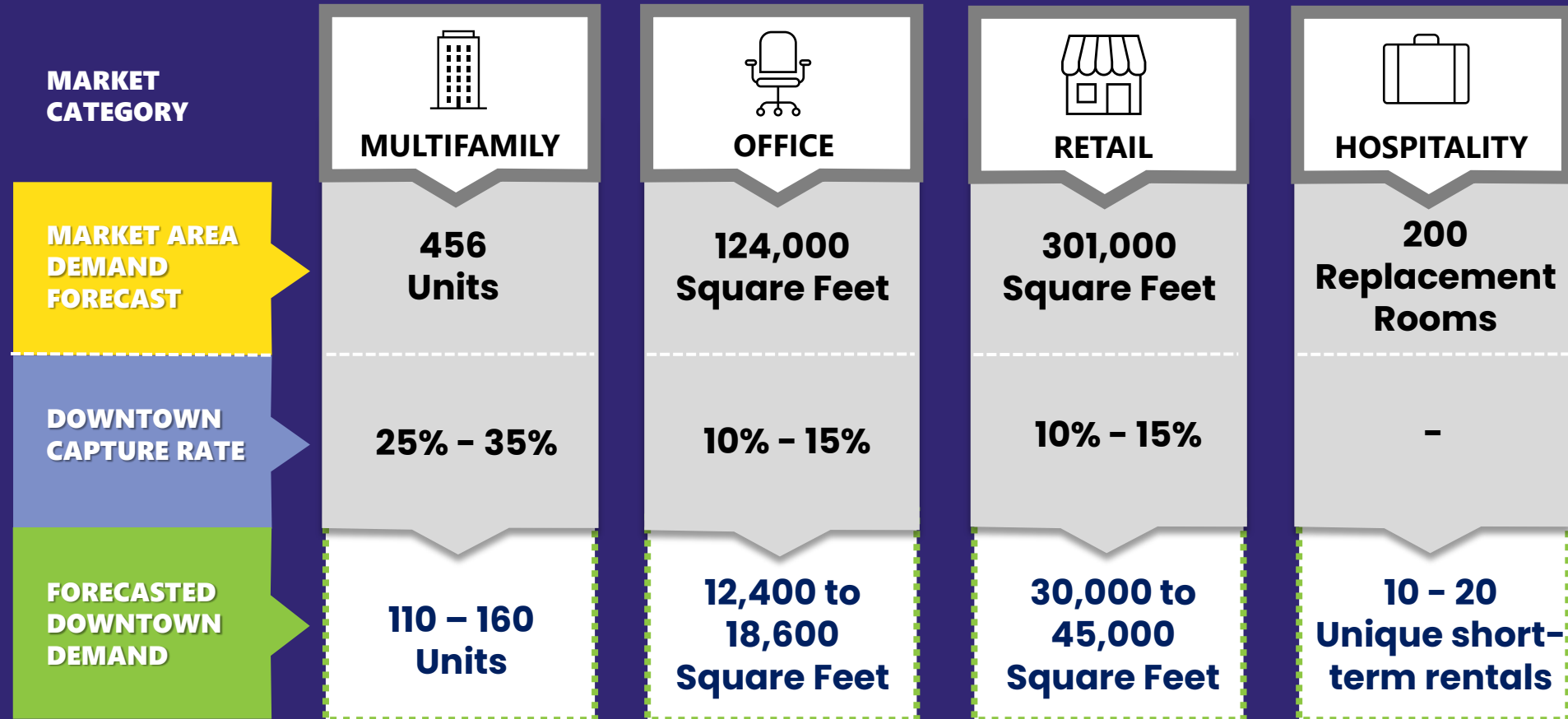
▪ Data sources

- US Census, ESRI Business, CoStar, Retail Strategies, Interviews



Market Potential / Demand Summary

15-Year Net Demand (2025 - 2040)



*Completed prior to the federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe.

Public Engagement

(Summary)

- Over 400 survey responses
- Listening Sessions
 - 60 participants (Master Plan)
 - 40 participants (Market Study)
- Public Meetings/Workshops
 - Civic Center (x2)
 - Adams Banquet Hall (x2)
 - Over 130 participants
- Committee Meetings (x4)



Community Input Themes

- **Opportunities**

- Leverage the riverfront
- Create residential opportunities
- Revitalize the water treatment plant into an entertainment destination (restaurant, micro-brewery, event venue) or mixed-use residential/commercial redevelopment
- Expand Carolina Civic Center (**completed!**)
- Improve transportation facilities (underway)
- Courthouse Rebuild



Community Input Themes

- **Challenges**

- Changing the **mindset** about downtown
- Safety / reality & perceptions
- Homelessness / unhoused population
- Building maintenance / rehabilitation
- Lack of traffic / people downtown
- Not enough to do / lack of entertainment
- Appearance / looks and feels empty
- River visibility / river access



Master Plan Focus

Key Observations for Downtown Lumberton:

- Creating Residential / Housing
- Activating Public Space / The River / Connecting
- Attracting Entertainment / Dining / Things to Do
- Encouraging Locally-owned Small Business / Start-ups
- Leveraging Publicly Owned Sites For Redevelopment
- Lumbee Tribe Federal Recognition (Major Future Influence)

Downtown Vision

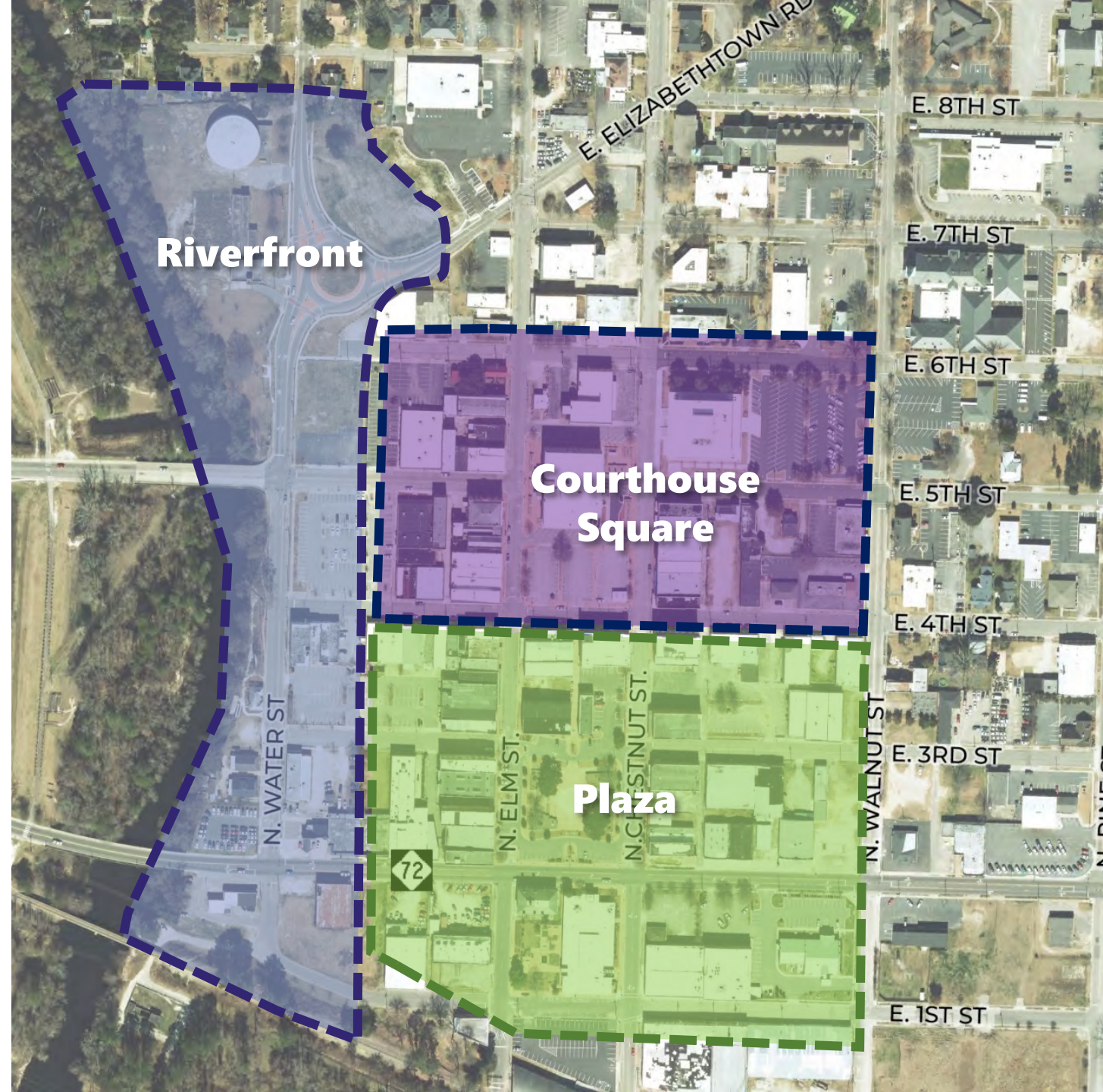
A Place for Everyone... ...Connected to Everything.

- Downtown is a place for all ages and backgrounds to gather for community events and entertainment.
- Downtown is connected to everything. It is the heart of our community - physically connected to everywhere by roads, trails, and the river; and culturally connected to our people through its historical significance and importance to our future.



Master Plan Focus Areas

- 1. Plaza** (Near-term build off current momentum)
- 2. Riverfront** (Destination development building off proximity to I-95 & the River, Tourism, and the Federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe)
- 3. Courthouse Square** (Long-term tied to County Courthouse plans)

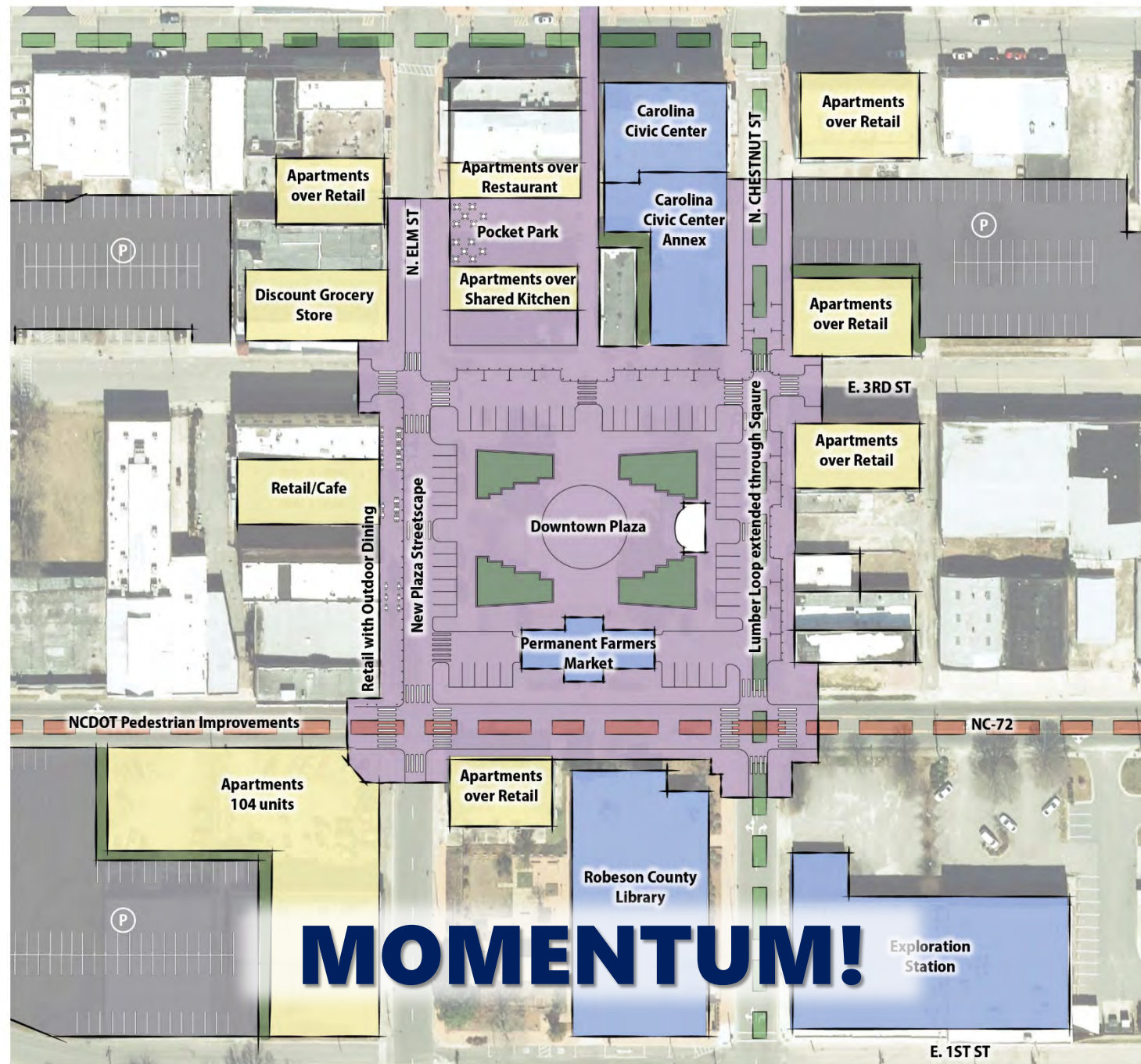


Near-Term Priority Focus:

***Build off the Momentum
around the Plaza!***

Dick Taylor Plaza

- The Plaza receives primary focus of new development – using private land as catalyst sites
- Focuses the center of activity on the Plaza with new festivals/events and public investments
- Locate a permanent Farmers' Market Hall in the Plaza to support events and bring additional activity to the plaza
- Shared kitchen on private land next to and spilling outdoor dining into the pocket park
- Leverage private development and recent property acquisitions around the plaza to further activate it and add dining, apartments and retail
- Leverage existing public activities around the plaza - the Exploration Station, Library, Civic Center
- Redesigns the streetscape perimeter to add wider sidewalks and moves parking to the plaza side – encourages safer pedestrian activity like outdoor dining
- Reroutes the Lumberton Loop onto Chestnut Street



Restaurant Market Strategies

- Opportunity gaps in this market area
 - **\$11M** - Full-Service Restaurant
 - **\$8.8M** - Bars and Drinking Places
- Positioning downtown as a future dining destination
 - ***Energy around the plaza***
 - Café in the pipeline for the Old City Hall building
 - Farmers market growth potential
 - Shared kitchen idea / shared infrastructure / restaurant incubator
 - Sanford Agricultural Marketplace example
 - Discount food sales store (on market now)
 - Potential locations on the river / views
 - Spin-off / capture tourists related to the potential Lumbee Tribe future investments (casino potential?) / destinations
- Absence of a brewery and distillery
- In early years, more downtown programming to drive customers / foot traffic











Dick Taylor Plaza

[New streetscape, farmers' market, plaza improvements]



Old City Hall / Fire Station

Renovations Underway

220 North Chestnut Street

Existing conditions



A two-story red brick building with a modern design. The ground floor features large glass windows and glass doors, while the second floor has several multi-paned windows. A dark grey awning runs along the top of the ground floor. A large, young tree with green leaves stands in the center of the sidewalk in front of the building. The foreground shows a paved parking lot with white lines. The sky is clear and blue.

Redevelopment Underway

Upper Story Housing Strategies

- Pocket storefront door to access upper story residential
- Owner occupied and rental options
- Incentives ***fire suppression grants, tax credits***
- A small number of existing units today



315 & 317 North Elm Street

Existing conditions.



313

STAIRWAY

315

BAIL BONDING

739-3333

24 HOUR SERVICE

For a small FEE, we will set you FREE!

ATTORNEY AT LAW

MARK D. LOCKLEAR

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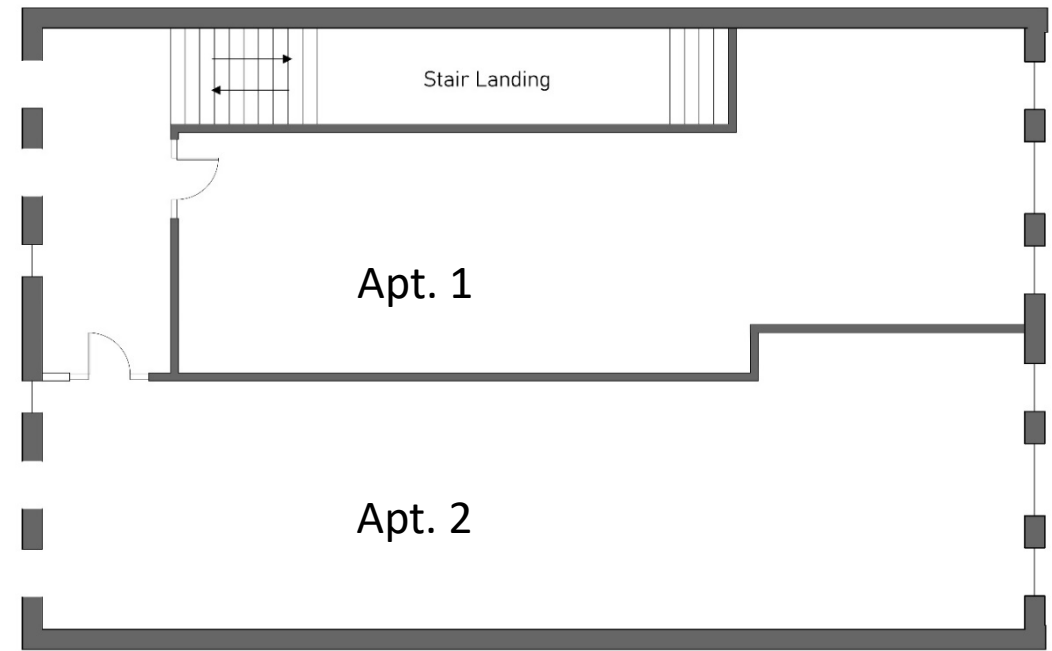
Redevelopment Concept

Ground floor coworking with
upper story residential

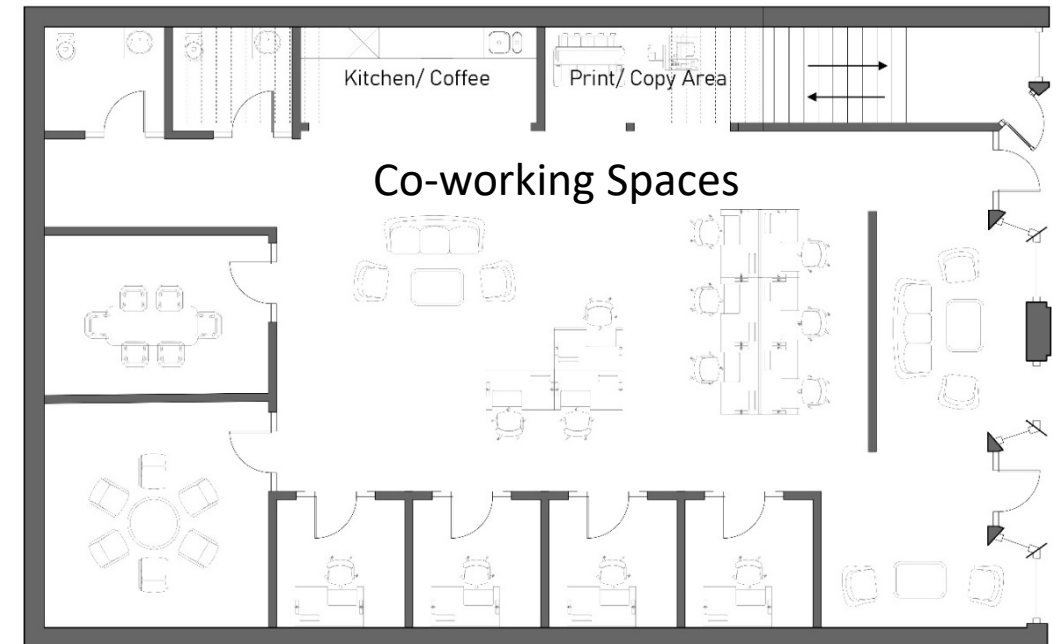


Interior Options for 315/317 N. Elm St.

- Ground level co-working space to attract remote and freelance workers into downtown. Shared amenities like copy, conference, networking
- Co-working rents space by the day, week, month depending on user needs. Can rent a full office or just a desk
- Upper-level apartments offer historic charm, high ceilings and same networking connections



2nd Floor



1st Floor

304 North
Elm St.
Before




304 North
Elm St.
After



FIRST STEPS: Plaza Actions

- Begin discussions / build partnerships with RCCC Culinary Program / Farmers' Market group, and other partners
- Begin developing plans for streetscape and permanent market hall location
- Downtown as a dining destination
- Small business incentives/recruitment
- Increase façade grant and create upper story housing incentives (not just around plaza)





418 North
Chestnut St.
**Existing
Conditions**

The image shows a two-story brick building facade. The upper story has six rectangular, double-hung windows with white frames, arranged in a horizontal row. The lower story features a large glass storefront with a central double glass door. A dark red awning extends across the width of the storefront. The building is flanked by other brick structures. A large, dark circular graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

418 North
Chestnut St.
Concept



503 North Elm Street

Conceptual renovation utilizing tax credits.

Entertainment / Things to Do

Spartanburg, SC

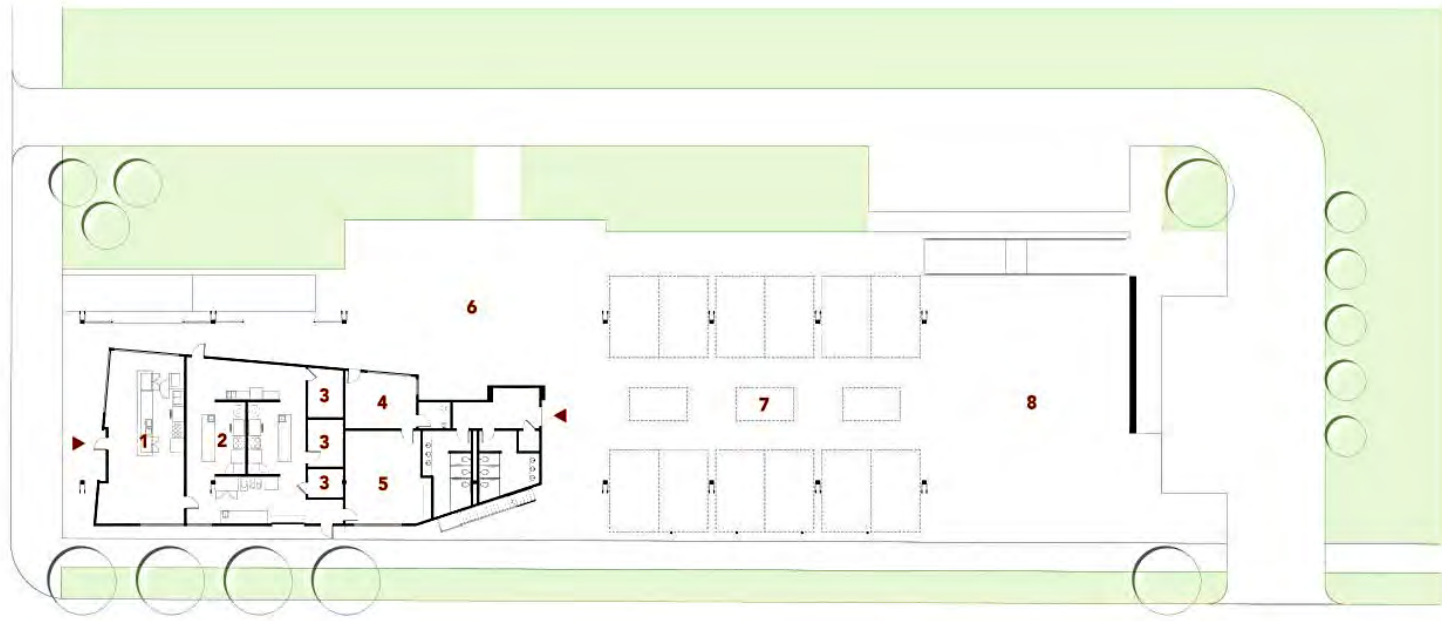
- Community event space
- Putt Putt / Family Activities

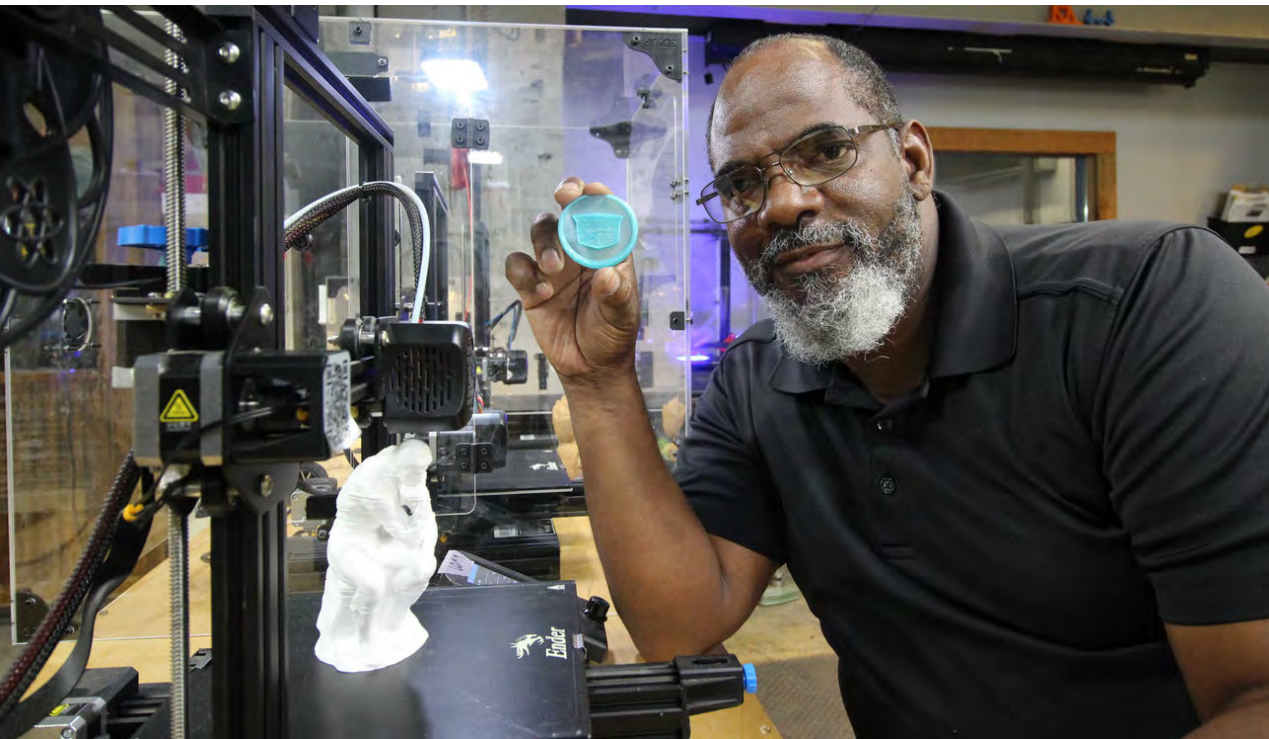


Ag Market Concept

Downtown Sanford

- Shared commercial kitchen
- Covered farmers market area
- Classrooms / flexspace
- Office space
- Storage
- Recently opened





Makerspaces

- Makerspaces are shops open to the public/members that provide tools, facilities and supervision in the creation of new products and processes
- **They can include:**
 - Woodshops
 - Metal shops
 - 3d Printing
 - Sewing
 - Plastics modeling
 - etc.
- Makerspaces are low overhead way for local entrepreneurs to prototype new ideas and products

Shared Kitchens

Carolina Commercial Kitchen - Charlotte

- Shared commercial grade kitchen with hourly/monthly rental rates, meeting all health standards
- More room to grow your business
- Ghost kitchen for deliveries of other restaurants and food truck support
- Allows low overhead start-up of food related businesses



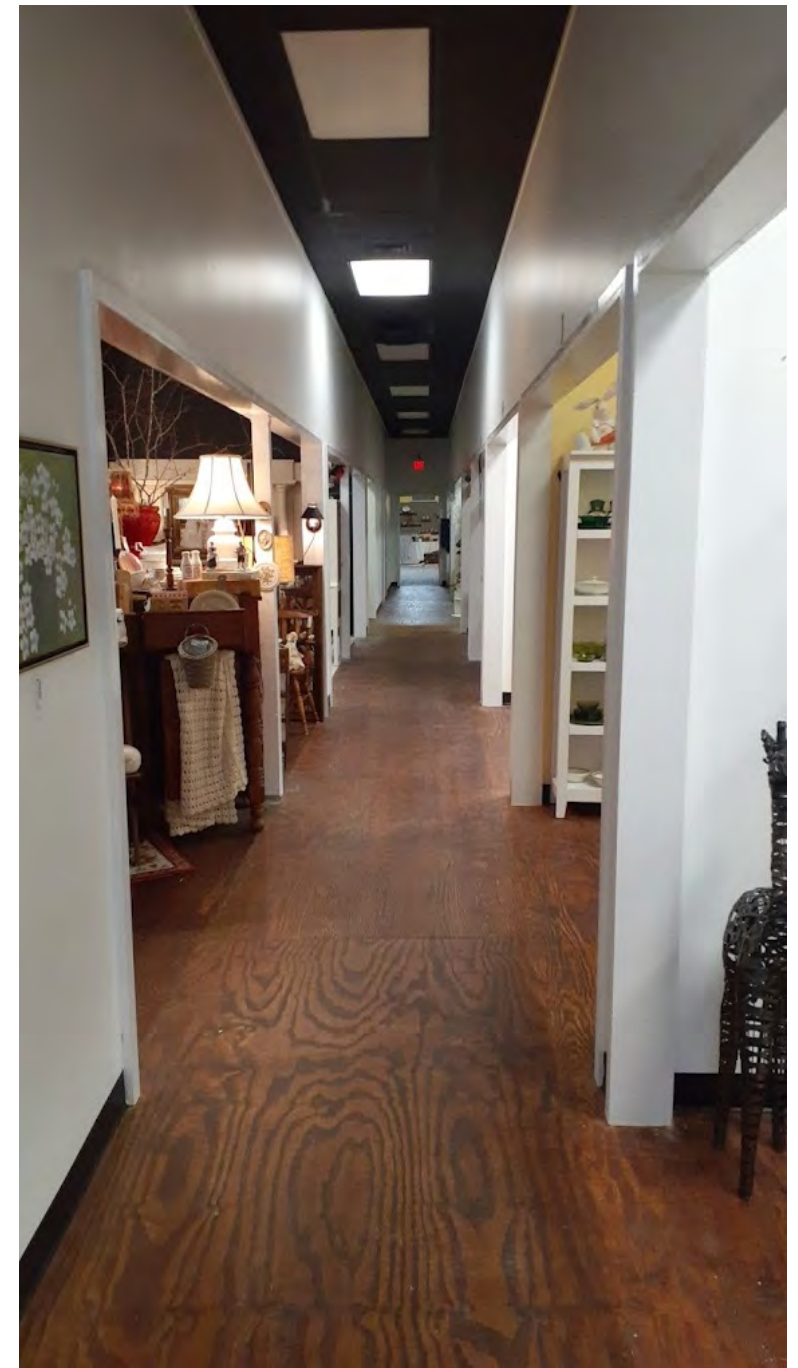
Little Blue Bakehouse – Raleigh

- Membership kitchen for bakers only
- Coffee and retail shop
- Works off monthly rental and % of retail sales
- Less complicated regulation if you don't cook meat or animal products



Shared Retail / Micro Retail

Market Place - Kannapolis



Shared Spaces

- Shared spaces can apply to many locally owned small business concepts:
 - Coworking
 - Artist Space
 - Social Media / Influencers
 - Market Hall
 - Food Hall (Greer, SC pictured)



Secondary Focus:

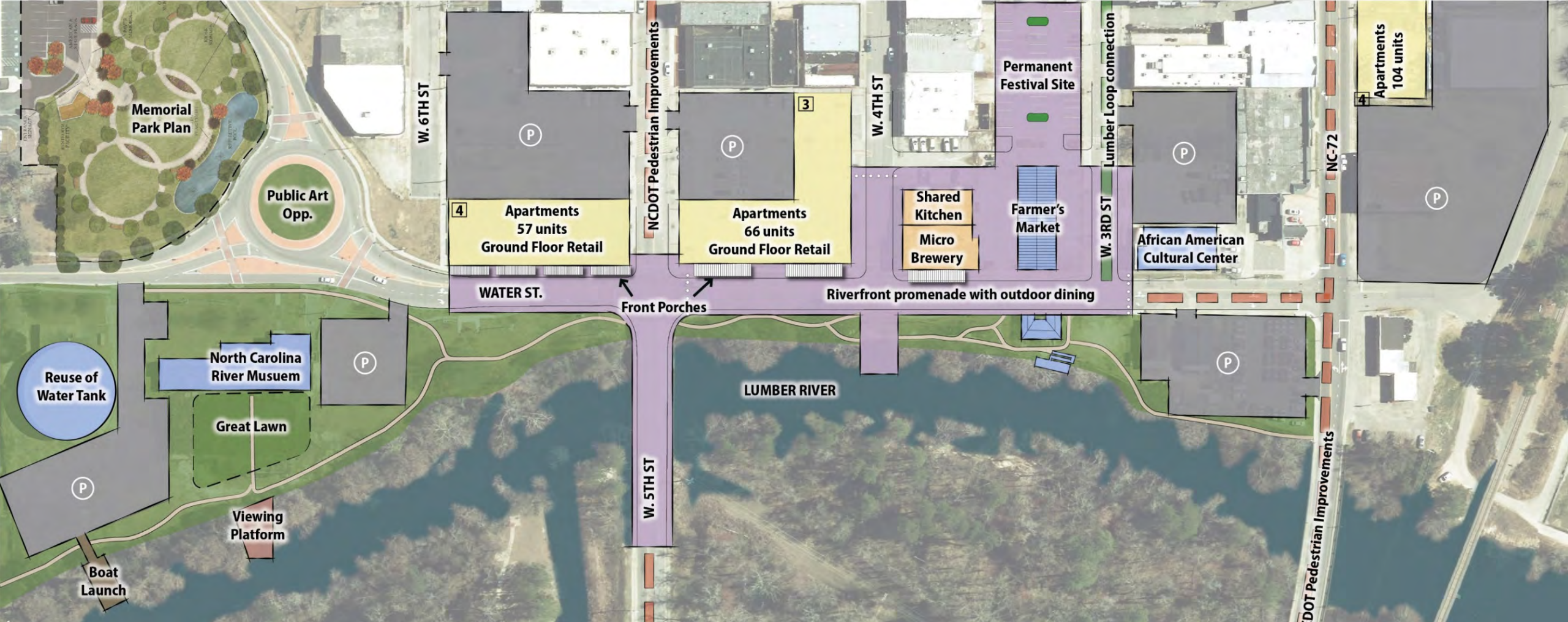
***Activate the Riverfront
as a tourism destination
for visitors***

Riverfront

Why this area?

- Leverage the Riverwalk / River Access
- City and County owned sites for redevelopment
- Riverfront residential opportunities
- Destinations/entertainment uses
- Bridge Replacement (to include a multi-use/pedestrian path)
- Tourism potential
- Opportunity sites (red circles)





- Focuses the center of activity on the riverfront – with new activities festivals/events and public investments.
- Leverage City and County sites for redevelopment – Water Plant
- Best DT Sites for new housing and rest./bars are along the river
- Creates a series of “Front Porch” dining areas facing the river
- Optional Farmers’ Market Hall brings activity to the riverfront.
- Optional NC River Ecology Museum/Housing at water plant
- Optional Shared kitchen support food business development and farmers’ market. Partnered with a microbrewery.
- Creates a Riverfront Promenade (Water Street temporarily closes) to house festivals and events along the river.
- Leverages new investments in pedestrian improvements and streetscapes along Water Street and Hwy 72 to support a riverfront focus. (Promenade)



Riverfront Housing Focus

- Downtown plaza receives primary focus of new development. New Farmers' Market and shared kitchen at the plaza.
- Does not create riverfront as the center of new activity – festivals and events are on the downtown plaza. Proposes just a temporary festival / event site in the County owned parking lot along the riverfront.
- Uses only City and privately owned land – not County lot - to explore redevelopment options. Proposes apartments at water treatment plant, Biggs site, City lot, and private lot on 3rd Street.
- Keeps existing proposed NCDOT improvements along Water Street.



Existing View
Aerial image of the riverfront.



Riverfront Destination Focus

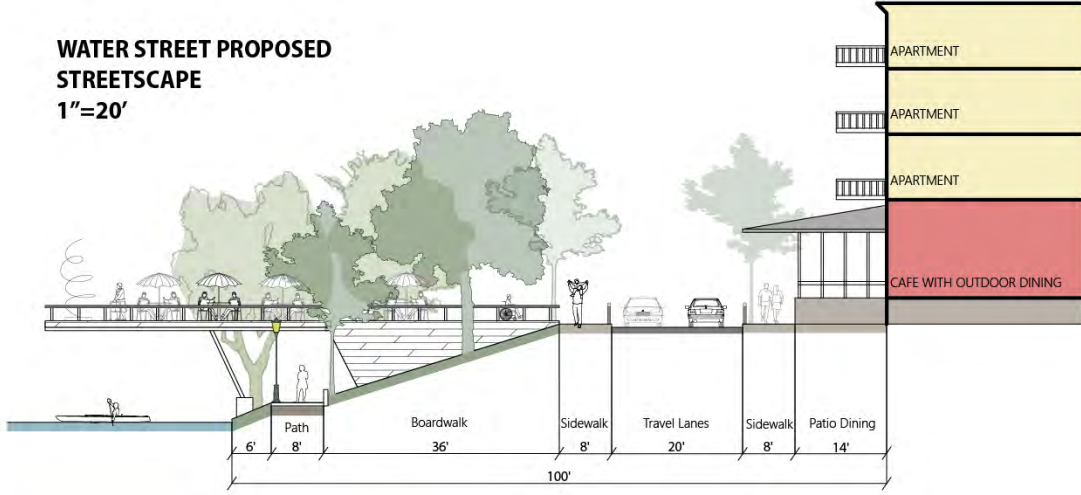
[renovated water treatment plan site, alternated farmer's market, "Front Porch," riverfront activation]



Riverfront Housing Focus

[water treatment plant redevelopment alternative]

**WATER STREET PROPOSED
STREETScape**
1"=20'



Water Street Streetscape

- Mixed-use buildings with riverfront views
- “Front Porch” patio dining concept
- Two lanes of travel (20')
- Street can be closed for events
- Wider sidewalks
- Enhanced river promenade



Residential (Multifamily) Strategies

- How do we encourage a portion of the forecasted new multifamily units to locate downtown?
 - Master Plan identified several potential sites that can support 50 to 150 units
 - Multiple layers of incentives likely needed to prove the market
 - Immediate action needed for Opportunity Zones 2.0
 - Credit union financing for teachers / public employees
 - Public investments (land cost, infrastructure, amenities)
- Who is the potential tenant for market rate multifamily housing in Lumberton?
 - Retirees / Empty Nesters
 - New people moving to the area (before they buy)
 - Traveling health care professionals (doctors, nurses, etc)
 - College students / internships / residency
 - Professionals / executives on short-term assignments
 - First adopters (teacher / public employee model)



Potential Residential Sites (Riverfront)

- City Owned Sites
- County Owned Site
- Private Owned Sites



FIRST STEPS: Riverfront Actions

- Destination / Event expansion
- Complete environmental work
- Continue to explore public private partnerships for destination and housing redevelopment options
- Lay groundwork for recruiting a developer
- Understand potential tourism impacts (related to I-95 & potential Lumbee Tribe investments)



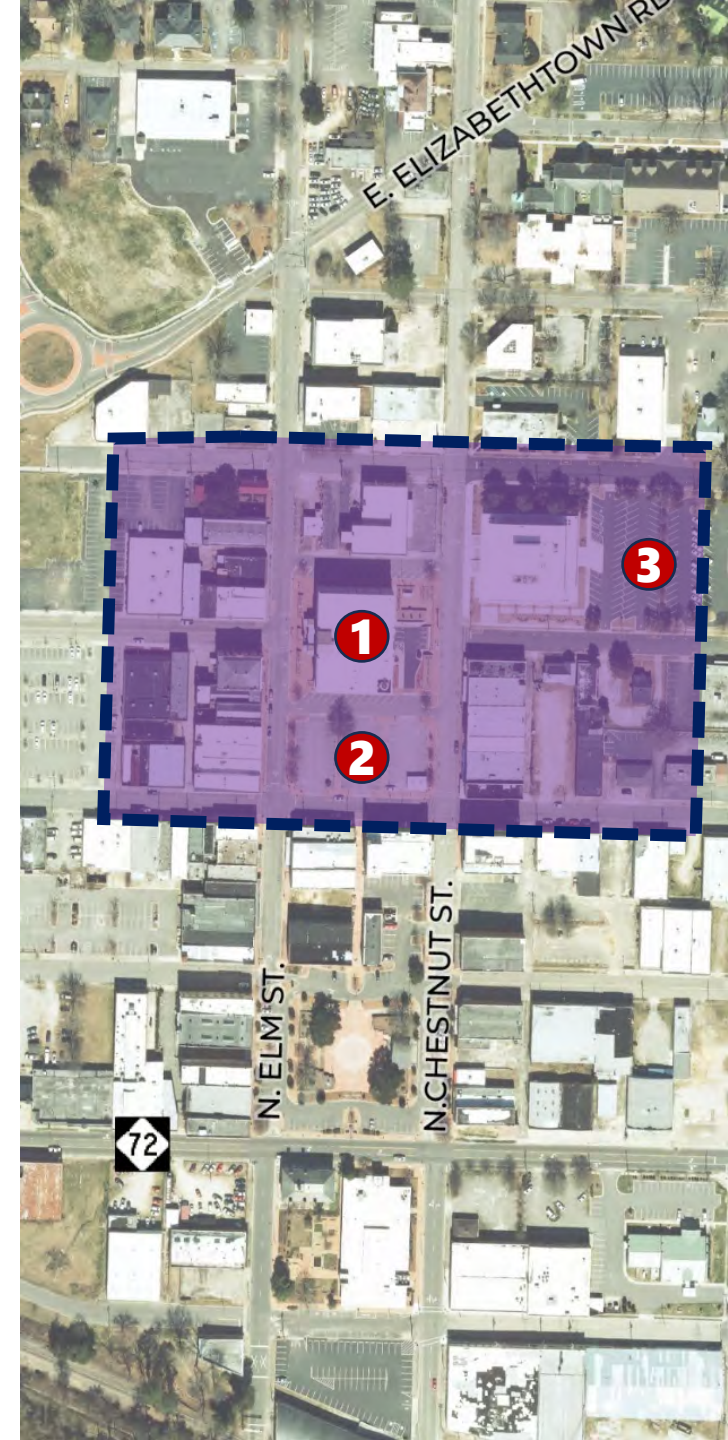
Long-Term Focus:

Courthouse Square Area

Courthouse Square

Why this area?

- Planned Courthouse replacement in the future
- Residential opportunities (with potential courthouse deck)
- Public space activation
- New streetscape – Elm & Chestnut
- Opportunity sites (red circles)
- City and County partnership opportunities





Courthouse Option 1

- Maximize the size of the new courthouse
- Small apartments lining the parking deck can provide affordable housing for City employees and improve the appearance from the street
- 110 new housing units
- Court is attached to parking deck
- No dead streetwalls
- Access to court will be internal from parking structure



Courthouse Option 2

- Maximize the number of apartment units
- Small apartments lining the parking deck can provide affordable housing for City employees and improve the appearance from the street
- 150 new housing units
- Smallest court footprint
- Court is attached to parking deck
- No dead streetwalls
- Terminate the vista to the river and 5th street
- Temporary court needed during construction



Courthouse Option 3

- Separate the Courthouse and the parking deck
- Small apartments lining the parking deck can provide affordable housing for City employees and improve the appearance from the street
- 110 new housing units
- No dead street walls
- Best Court Frontage
- Add alley for internal service
- Can keep the old Courthouse while building the new



Courthouse Option 4

- Restore 5th Street segment and open vistas to the river
- Separate Court and Parking Deck
- Small apartments lining the parking deck can provide affordable housing for City employees and improve the appearance from the street
- 110 new housing units
- Most dead street walls
- Good Court Frontage



2016 - County-owned parking lot



2019 - Parking Deck constructed - land reserved on street per Master Plan



Concord Example - Novi Flats

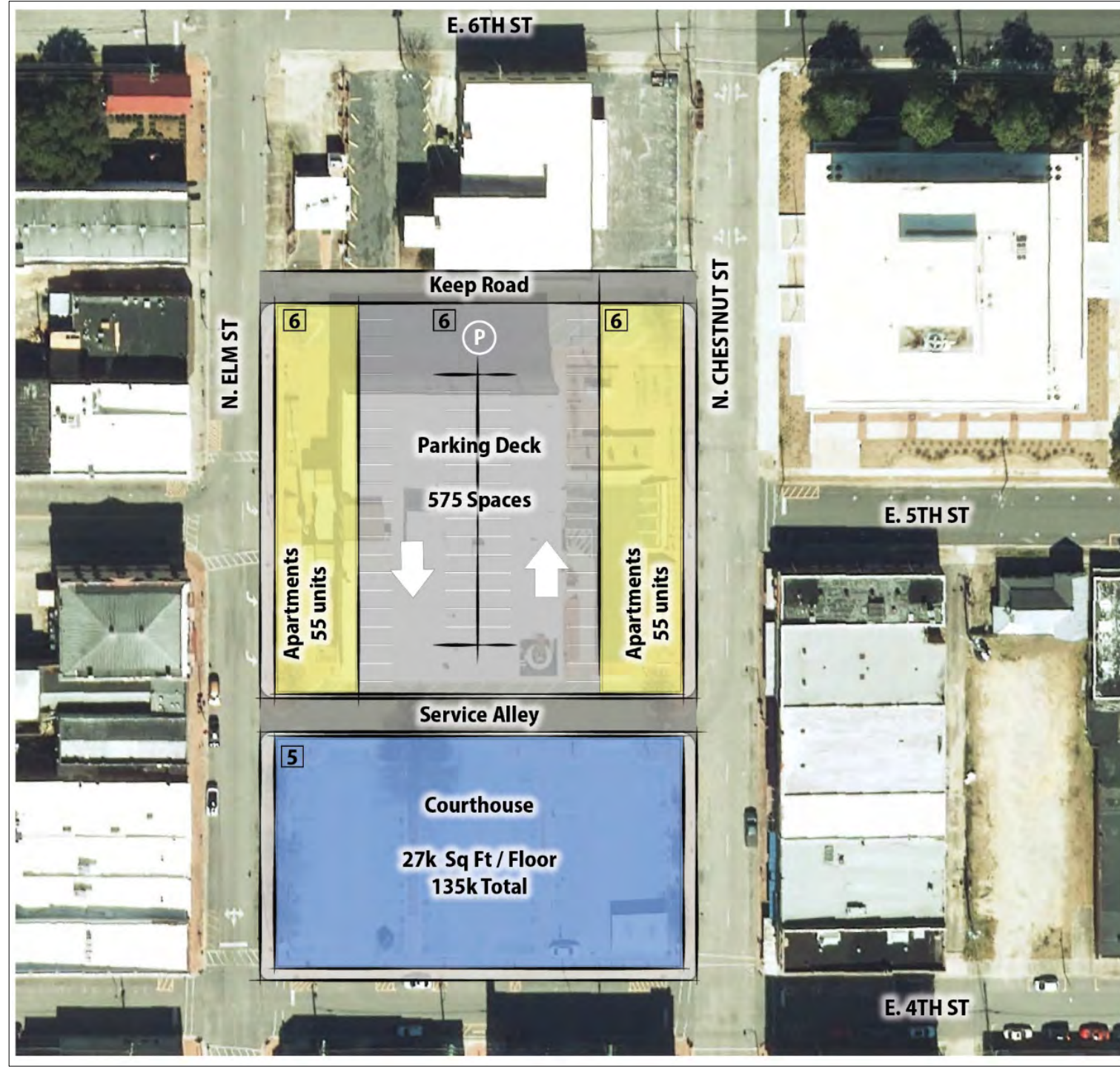
- Opened in Spring of 2024
- 43 residential units
- 7,000 sq. ft. of street level commercial



Raleigh Examples

The **L Building** wraps the Wake County Courthouse Deck

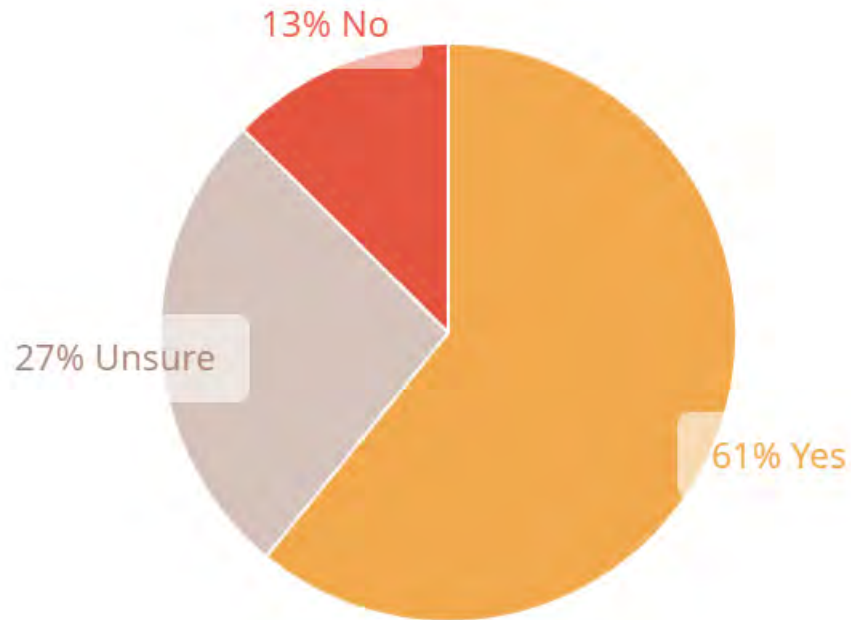
The **Palladium Plaza** wraps the Red Hat HQ Deck



Option 3 Preferred

- Maintain use of old Courthouse during construction of new
- Parking deck serves Courthouse, Administration Bldg. and new Apartments – opening County existing surface parking lots for redevelopment
- Residential liners add new ground level activity to the Street
- Prominent 3-sided Courthouse on key Streets

Would you be more willing to teach in a district that provided affordable teacher housing?



Access to housing makes a difference for teachers, like Canaan Frisby

Julie Pittman, special advisor to the state superintendent for teacher engagement, says, “We know that essential educator housing is important for teachers for recruitment and retention.”

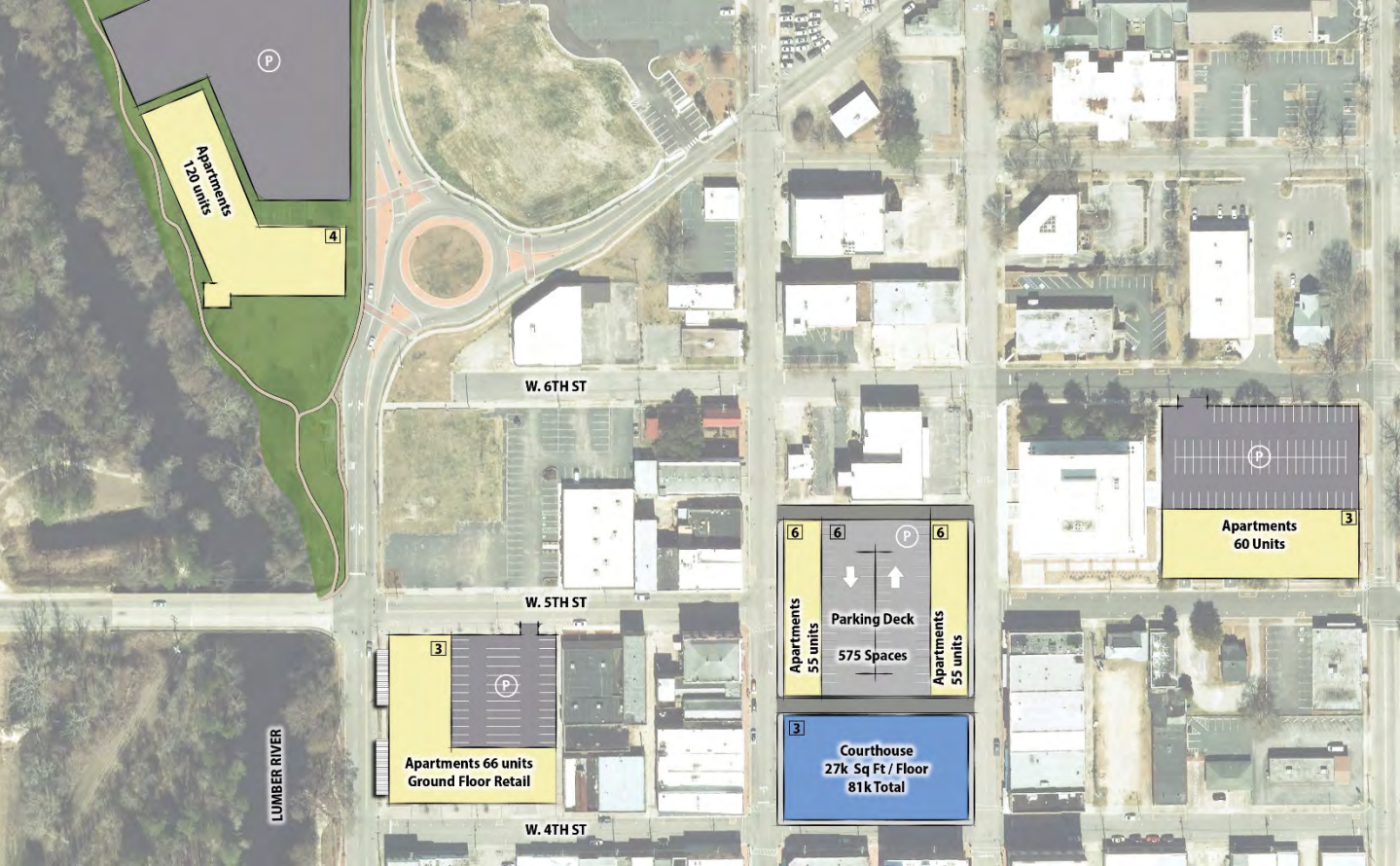
Meet [Canaan Frisby](#), a teacher at [Johnson Elementary](#) in [Buncombe County Schools](#), who lives in the [Williams-Baldwin Teacher Campus](#) with his brother — also a teacher. They share the \$950 in rent.

Why housing wrapping the deck?

- County, Schools and City can use apartments as recruiting tool for public service employees – teachers, police, fire and others.
- SECU offers attractive financing to meet this need – government employees
- Some units can also be private market rate
- Leverages the parking deck for 24-hour use – residents use after employees go home at night
- Public servants more likely to be early adopters of new downtown housing

Return on Investment (Example)

1. River Parking Lot (County)
2. Parking Deck Wrap
3. County Admin. Building Lot
4. Old Water Treatment Plan



Public Apartment Sites	Size	Units	Value - \$300/ft.	City Revenue - .0065	County Revenue - .0077
Site 1 River Lot - County	81,600	70	\$24,480,000	\$159,120	\$188,496
Site 2 Parking Deck Wrap	100,800	110	\$30,240,000	\$196,560	\$232,848
Site 3 County Admin. Lot	50,400	66	\$15,120,000	\$98,280	\$116,424
Site 4 City - Old Water Plant	107,200	120	\$32,160,000	\$209,040	\$247,632
Totals		366	\$102,000,000	\$663,000	\$785,400

Outdoor Dining



Outdoor Dining

No fencing needed anymore – walk thru style cafes ok



Greer, SC

Other cities are taking a hybrid approach



Greer, SC

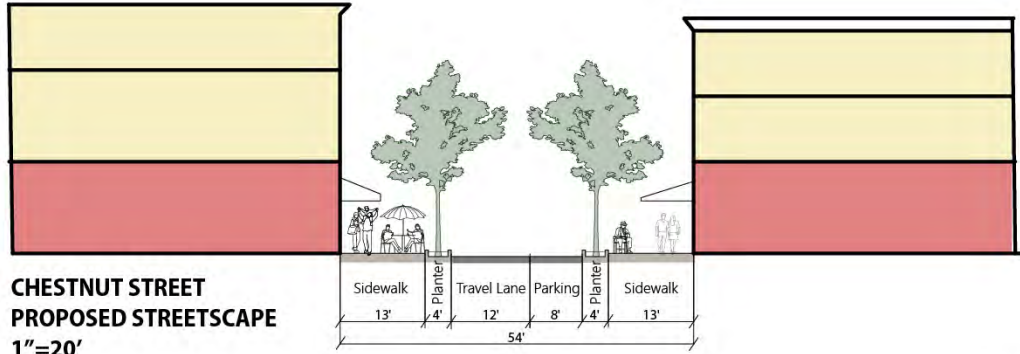


West Palm Beach, FL



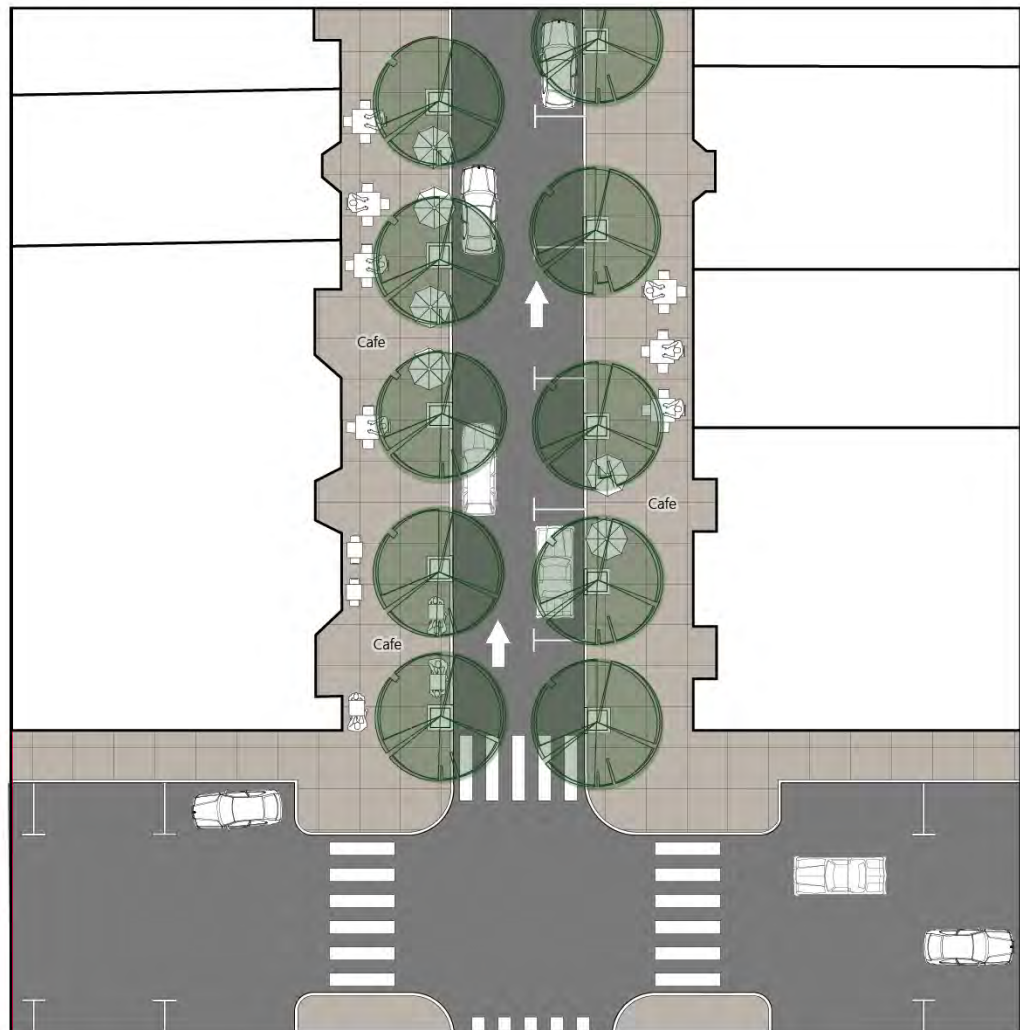
West Palm Beach, FL



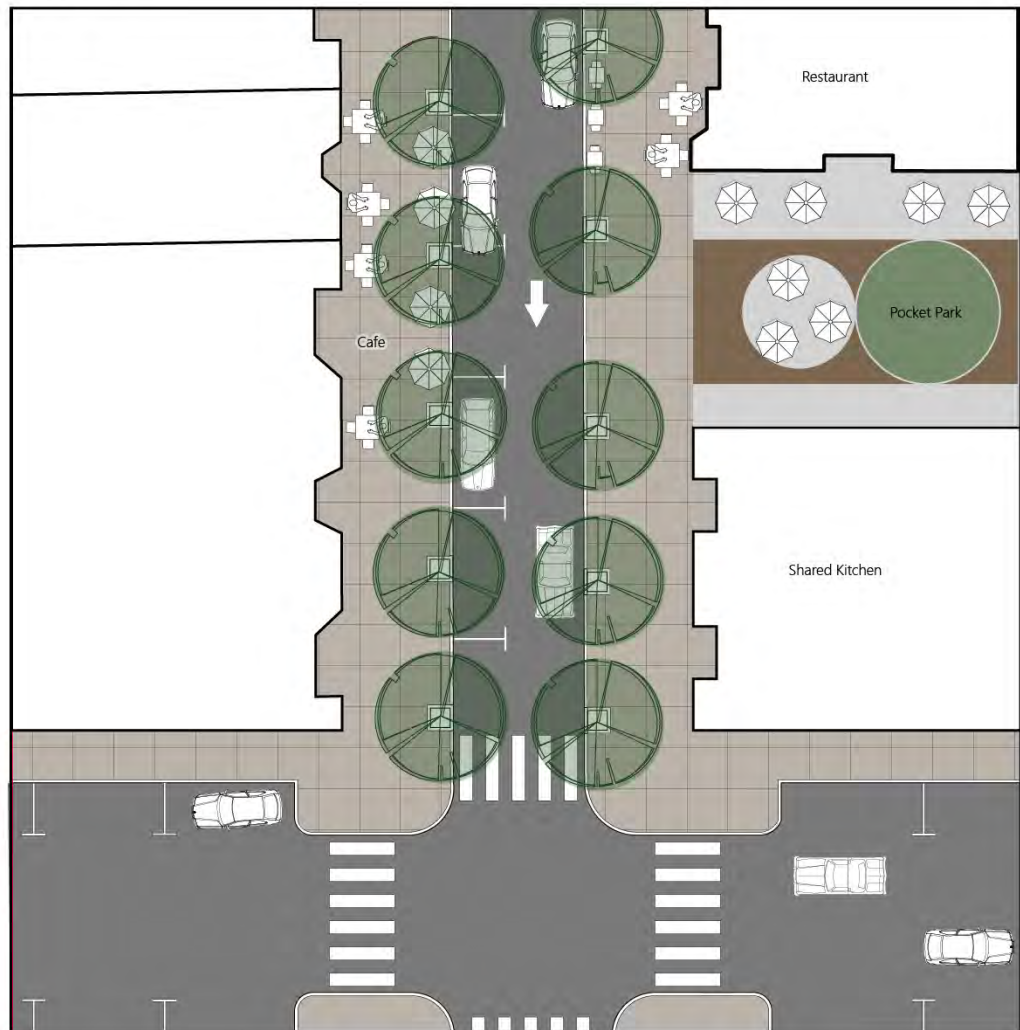
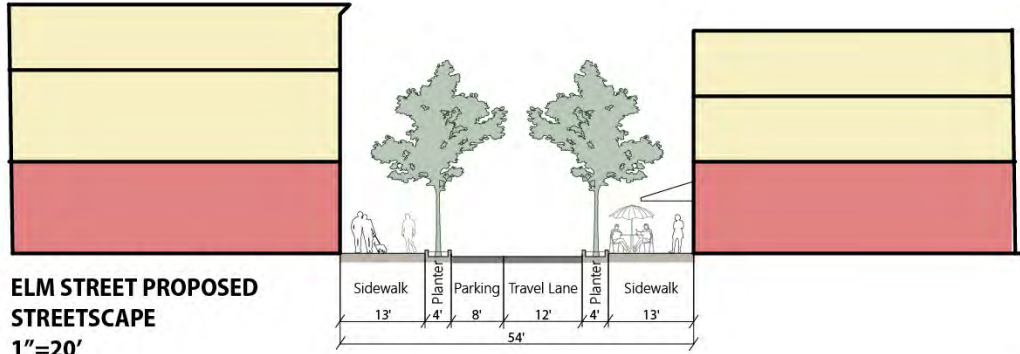


Courthouse Square Streetscape [Chestnut Street]

- One lane of travel (12')
- One lane of on-street parking (8')
- Sidewalks (13' each side)
- Street tree planting area (4')



Existing



Courthouse Square Streetscape [Elm Street]

- One lane of travel (12')
- One lane of on-street parking (8')
- Sidewalks (13' each side)
- Street tree planting area (4')



Elm Street

Pedestrian focus with outdoor seating/street activation.



Elm Street

Pedestrian focus with outdoor seating.

FIRST STEPS:

Courthouse Square Actions

- Continue to collaborate with County leadership
- Begin to develop plans for streetscape improvements
- Evaluate courthouse expansion options and housing opportunities
 - Explore teacher/public employee housing programs



Supplementary Next Steps:

Additional Actions

SUPPLEMENTARY NEXT STEPS:

Additional Actions

- Connecting
 - Lumberton Loop
 - Lumber River / Activation
- Organizational Capacity
 - Downtown Action Team
 - Building a greater capacity
- Understanding Tourism Opportunities
 - I-95 (still under construction)
 - Lumber River (leverage)
 - Federal Recognition of the Lumbee Tribe





Master Plan Update

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