

Town of South Hill
Comprehensive Plan
September 14, 2015

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Introduction & History

The Town of South Hill is located in the east-central portion of Mecklenburg County. Incorporated in 1901, South Hill is the largest town in size and population within the County, encompassing a land area of 9.31 square miles and containing 4,531 residents in 2000.

Originally known as Ridgefork or Binford’s Fork, the community consisted of three houses, an ordinary, a general store, and a race track. A short distance to the north was a small settlement known as South Hill which was relocated to Ridgefork with the completion of the Boydton – Petersburg Plank Road. With the coming of the railroad the “new” Town of South Hill was laid off and surveyed, and was incorporated on February 16, 1901. Originally the town was circular, 1 ¼ miles in diameter.

South Hill’s location at the crossing of several important highways and the railroad laid the groundwork for a prosperous community. This transportation advantage in a rural, agrarian area, made South Hill the hub of business where raw goods were exported to market and finished goods returned. Tobacco constituted the major agricultural product, flourishing to make South Hill the largest tobacco market in the County and the third-largest flue-cured tobacco market in Virginia.

The completion of U.S. Route 1 in the early 1930’s South Hill’s first paved road, and interstate highway I-85 in 1965 spurred new growth in the Town and a change in its economy. The founding of Community Memorial Hospital in 1954 and the addition of a number of manufacturing plants helped to assure the Town’s prosperity. South Hill still serves as the largest agricultural, commercial, and employment center for the County.

Population

Effective January 1, 2001, the Town of South Hill annexed 2.96 square miles of land and 128 persons (see Map Exhibit 1). The 2000 U.S. Census did not include these citizens in their count of South Hill’s population in their final figure of 4,403. All data obtained from the Census for the figures and tables in this comprehensive plan document will therefore only apply to the 4,403 residents that lived in South Hill in 2000.

The following table shows general population and age data for both the Town of South Hill and for Mecklenburg County.

	Town		County		Town as a % of County
	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2000	% Change 1990-2000	
Population	4,531	7%	32,380	10%	13%
Population <18 years old	23.2%	- 1%	21.6%	- 7%	

Population ≥ 65 years old	19.9%	+ 5%	17.8%	+ 3%	
Median Age	39.9	7% older	40.9	9% older	

The County continues to lag behind the Commonwealth for household income. The following data, from the Weldon Cooper Center, gives the Median AGI on Married Couple Returns for the year 1999. Data was taken from income tax returns filed with the Commonwealth. Mecklenburg County ranked 114th out of 135 jurisdictions in the Commonwealth.

	Mecklenburg County		Commonwealth	
	1999	% Change 1994-1999	1999	% Change 1994-1999
Median AGI on Married Couple Returns	\$35,117	24.9%	\$53,475	26.2%

Housing

The Town of South Hill must be equipped to accommodate a growing number of citizens with diverse incomes and backgrounds by making available a variety of affordable, healthy and safe dwellings. Housing is the dominant land use in the Town, and the overall housing stock can be described as being in good to fair condition.



Figure 1: New Apartment Construction - Pine Wood Forest Apartments on Powell Drive

A number of services are provided by the Town of South Hill that complements living within the town boundaries such as police protection, fire protection, emergency services, a library, and parks. Additionally, water, sewer, and garbage services are more than adequate. Community recreation is available for all ages with a variety of sports being offered. There are a number of schools in the area as well as churches of various denominations. Community Memorial Healthcenter is a well-staffed and conveniently located hospital serving the town and surrounding region.

Total residential units increased from 1,822 in 1990 to 2,055 in 2001, which is an increase of 12%. Of the increase, 67 units were added as a result of the January 1, 2001 annexation. Due to the large portion of the County's population in the over 50 age bracket and the Lakes as popular retirement communities, the need for condominiums, apartments, town-homes and assisted living establishments will likely increase.

The Town has seen several different developments over the past five years for additional multi-family housing. These include:

Name of the Units	Street Location	Date Opened	# Units Built As of 2001	# Units Planned
Castle Heights Apartments	Raleigh Avenue	2001	16	48
Smith Street Apartments addition	Smith Street	2000	46	0
Pine View Apartments	Powell Drive	2000	48	0
Briar Cliff Apartments	Raleigh Avenue			20
Lakewood Apartments	Lakewood Dr.	2005		23

The town continues to encourage the construction of attractive single and multifamily housing developments to meet the growing needs. It should be noted that several successful examples of these developments have been built in the last few years.

Two examples of cluster development are the Lee's Court and Beaver Creek condominiums. Both of these developments have been successful and have given a type of housing that is low maintenance and is particularly attractive to the retirement market.

Lee's Court is about 15 years old with 27 units all owner occupied with all units sold. They range from 1350 sf to 1500 sf. There are three and four units to a building with each having street parking. The association handles all outside maintenance and upkeep.

Beaver Creek is located off North Mecklenburg Avenue and includes 46 units with 50 more available sites for the future. The duplexes are 2 and 3 bedroom units with 1500 sf. It includes a walking trail and a lake.

Both of these developments have been successful projects based on the salability, appreciation and attractiveness of the properties. In addition, it is the efficient use of the land and preservation of the natural beauty of the area has been beneficial to the community as a whole.

Future developers are encouraged to use these examples in planning their projects. They are proof that this type of development is less expensive to build, less paved roads, water and sewer lines, etc., more salable and more profitable as a whole.

A good example of a successful apartment project is the Castle Heights Apartments on Raleigh Avenue. They are attractive and provide quality housing to its

tenants. The Briarcliff Development is scheduled to be built on the opposite of Raleigh Avenue and will consist of duplexes for lease.

There are still deficiencies in the housing market. The overall inventory of homes must increase or there must be land available for residential development in order to meet the housing needs of new industry. The need for starter homes and homes for middle income brackets has been consistently cited by realtors, residents and those involved in economic development. While a large percentage of the dwelling units in town are not owner occupied according to the 2000 Census (41.6% renter-occupied), there is still an insufficient number of available rental units to meet the demand. Lack of this type of housing often forces young adults to leave the town and county. The citizen committee also expressed concerns regarding government subsidized housing. On-site management and the number of apartments per unit limited to four have been suggested by law enforcement officials as quality control measures in multi-family dwellings. The deficiency in rental housing stock hinders economic development efforts as well. Local realtors have received numerous calls from workers associated with new area industries seeking rental and medium priced housing.

South Hill Building Permits Issued 1996-2000

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Townhouses	Apartments	Additions Valued at >\$15,000
1996	26	0	11	0	9
1997	29	0	0	0	13
1998	12	0	10	0	13
1999	23	0	0	6	8
2000	2	0	0	64	10
2001	7	4	0	0	3
	Commercial	Industrial	Motels	Public	Additions
1996	12	0	0	0	6
1997	6	1	1	0	14
1998	2	0	0	0	12
1999	2	0	1	1	14
2000	7	0	0	0	10
2001	13	0	0	1	13

Another area of concern in the South Hill community is the number of houses in disrepair and with deficient plumbing and / or heating. Both from a health and safety as well as an appearance standpoint, these properties give cause for concern. In 1991 the Circle Drive community, through a Community Development Block Grant, received improvements to a number of houses aiding low to moderate income residents. Another Community Development Block Grant project renovated 31 homes in the Grove area, in addition to rebuilding the streets, water, and sewer lines in that neighborhood. Other neighborhoods in need of improvement are:

Halifax Street, south of Atlantic Street

Main Street, west of Mecklenburg Avenue
Virginia Street and Meadow Street, east of Goode's Ferry Road.
The town has received a \$700,000 CDBG grant for improvements to
Halifax Street.

A third area of concern in the South Hill community is a shortage of assisted living housing for those of our citizens who are not fully able to care for themselves independently. The median age of South Hill's population according to the 2000 Census is 39.9 years of age, which is an increase from the median age of 37.2 in 1990. As our citizenry ages, more facilities are needed to provide varying levels of assistance in their day-to-day lives.

The citizen's committee recommended encouraging homeowners, including landlords, to remodel and renovate existing housing of all types. The committee also suggested that the Town work in partnership with private industry, individuals and other government agencies to assure that the various housing needs of its citizens are adequately met.

HOUSING GOALS

Maximize the opportunity for a diverse range of standard residential housing to serve the varying needs of the present and future population. Housing opportunities of the Town of South Hill should be a carefully planned mix of quality, well-managed rental units, suitable lower income housing, moderately priced single family homes and housing for elderly citizens in the form of both independently owned town homes or condominiums and apartment buildings.

Actions

- A. Increase the amount of property available for residential use.
 - a. Allocate proper and suitable areas for desirable low, medium, and high density residential development.
 - b. Identify underdeveloped areas. Determine the availability of water and sewer and road capacity, and rezone as appropriate.
- B. Designate areas for future development for low, medium, and high density growth where there are existing public services and thoroughfares in an effort to promote residential population growth inside the Town's boundaries.
- C. Increase the availability of rental housing.
 - a. Promote the development of non-subsidized apartments and townhouse rental units.
- D. Insure that all town residents are afforded safe and sanitary housing by seeking grants.
- E. Support the development of assisted living facilities and / or nursing home facilities.

- F. Encourage further development of affordable housing within the town limits, i.e. Wilson Street area and possible Taylor Town on Goodes Ferry or the Chaptico Acres.

THE ECONOMY

Labor Force

South Hill is the County's largest town and major employment center. According to the latest census, there were 2,065 persons over 16 years old employed within the Town. Services, accounting for 31% of the workforce, are the largest sector, followed by Retail Trade at 23% and Manufacturing at 18%. Ten percent of the Services sectors are employed in the health services industry. Community Memorial Health Center located in the Town is one of the largest employers in the County. The town's role as a service provider is much in evidence by these figures.

The Town of South Hill has assisted in the development of the Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center, a workforce training center in conjunction with the Southside Virginia Community College, the South Hill Community Development Association, and Mecklenburg County. Grant funds made available by the nationwide settlement by the tobacco industry with the state governments are assisting in the development of the center. The training center has been identified by local industries as a pressing need. The center is located at 118 East Danville Street. The center will also provide another source of jobs and activity in the downtown area, and will fit in with the Town's efforts at downtown revitalization.

The Town conducted a citizen survey in conjunction with the 1997 Comprehensive Plan update. The town's survey noted a need for clothing stores, shoe stores, and electronics stores. A few retail stores have opened such as Office Discounters, clothing store and come offices. The requests were fairly even with regard to household goods, appliances and restaurants. The respondents indicated that there was an adequate number of grocery and drug stores. The need for a greater number of apparel and shoe stores remains a factor in 2002. Several new restaurants have or are scheduled to open, such as Arnold's Diner, Arby's and Cracker Barrel.

Most residents answering the survey also indicated a need for more electricians, plumbers, and appliance repairmen. Healthcare providers also indicated a severe shortage of certified nurse's aides and other licensed healthcare professionals. Southside Virginia Community College is currently providing nursing assistant, LPN and RN courses. Heating and Air Conditioning services received an even response. The majority of respondents felt that the number of auto repair services and professional services such as attorneys, accountants, doctors, dentists or banks was sufficient.

Commercial Activity

The following table presents the Economic Profile of South Hill and Mecklenburg County over the last four Economic Census. The data show a general trend towards increased sales and payroll, but a decline in the number of retail establishments and the number of wholesale establishments. The data show a significant increase in the number of service establishments, although some of that may be accounted for by inconsistency in the presentation of the Census information. Restaurants and hotels are also now accounted for as a service industry.

**Economic Profile
South Hill and Mecklenburg County
Retail, Wholesale, & Service Sales**

	Establishments		Sales (\$million)		Annual Payroll (\$million)		# of Employees	
	South Hill	Meck. County	South Hill	Meck. County	South Hill	Meck. County	South Hill	Meck. County
Retail Trade								
1982	81	208	53.1	107.3	5.4	11.0	674	1475
1987	96	241	74.2	149.4	8.7	16.4	982	1901
1992	93	232	83.7	171.8	10.6	20.5	1077	2058
1997	77	200	147.1	272.5	13.1	26.3	915	2109
Wholesale Trade								
1982	19	51	48.4	82.6	2.1	3.9	159	323
1987	18	50	26.8	70.5	2.3	5.4	159	427
1992	20	58	39.7	111.8	4.2	8.7	214	551
1997	12	38	30.7	71.1	1.2	4.9	66	230
Service Industries*								
1982	55	118	8.1	13.5	2.7	4.3	210	404
1987	59	138	13.3	21.1	4.7	6.9	323	575
1992	64	169	20.3	36.6	7.3	11.8	386	784
1997	107	260	42.3	79.9	15.8	27.4	1163	2100

* Service Industries includes data from the following categories in the 1997 Economic Census: Real Estate, Professional / Scientific / Technical, Administrative and Support & Waste Management, Health Care & Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Other Services exc. Public Administration.

Sources of Data: U. S. Census Bureau 1997 Economic Census, Town of South Hill 1997 Comprehensive Plan.

The following table outlines the Retail Establishments in South Hill as of the 1997 Economic Census, including their number and the sales volume by category, if reported.

Retail Trade Establishments and Sales

Retail Establishment Type	Number	Total Sales (\$1,000)
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealer	16	\$35,359,000
Furniture and Home Furnishings Store	2	Not reported
Electronics and Appliances	1	Not reported
Building Material and Garden Equipment	10	\$15,542,000
Food and Beverage Stores	8	Not reported
Health and Personal Care Stores	7	Not reported
Gasoline Stations	11	\$34,766,000
Clothing and Clothing Accessories	6	\$6,710,000
Sporting Goods, hobby, book, and music	3	\$313,000
General Merchandise	4	\$7,286,000
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	7	Not reported
Non Store Retailers (for South Hill, fuel dealers)	2	Not reported
Accommodation*	9	\$4,613,000
Foodservices & drinking places*	22	\$12,020,000

*These two items are reported under a separate category from retail services effective with the 1997 Economic Census

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 1997 Economic Census.

The commercial activity in the Town continues to be healthy overall, and the Town remains a regional center for commerce. There is continued commercial development in the area of the interchange between U. S. Highway 58 and Interstate 85, including three new hotels and several restaurants as well as several new retail businesses such as a Wal-Wart Supercenter and Riders, Inc.

There is a major redevelopment underway for the downtown commercial area. Citizens of the Town have formed a Downtown Revitalization Committee to assist the downtown commercial area. The Committee received grant and local funds to do things such as facade renovations, sidewalk renovations, street improvements, parking improvements, addition of green spaces, and relocation of overhead utilities. Phase I of the revitalization was complete in 2004. The town has made application for T21 grant funds for Phase II.

There is also a movement to establish a Farmer's Market in the downtown area. The Farmer's Market will provide an outlet for local growers to reach retail customers, and create additional traffic and activity in the downtown area.

Also, the Community Development Association is securing funding to begin to renovate the vacant Colonial Theater. The theater, located in the heart of downtown, has been closed for years, and was in a state of disrepair. The roof and windows have been replaced as the first phase of the renovation project. Future uses for the Colonial Theater could satisfy a number of local needs, including a welcome center, a cultural arts center, and educational uses.

One area of commercial activity which has fallen off in the past five years is the decline of the tobacco market in South Hill. The decline of the tobacco quotas and the rise of direct contracting between growers and tobacco companies have led to the demise of all of the tobacco sales in the Town of South Hill save one. The decline of this industry has led to the conversion of Dixie Warehouse, Golden Leaf and the Virginia Warehouse into storage or manufacturing facilities.

A major contributor to economic development in South Hill has been the efforts of the Community Development Association to promote tourism. A prime example is the ongoing support for fishing tournaments held on Lake Gaston and Buggs Island Lake. In addition, the Community Development Association strongly supports the Tobacco Farm Life Museum, the model train exhibit in the offices of the South Hill Chamber of Commerce, and the Virginia S. Evans Doll Museum. An idea to further enhance the experience of tourists in downtown South Hill is the development of a historical walking trail capitalizing on the Colonial Theater Building, the downtown district, the South Hill United Methodist Church, the historic homes on Franklin Street, and the Veteran's Memorial Park. The Town encourages boat and gun shows, bass tournaments and other Chamber efforts to bring tourism to South Hill.

Manufacturing

New plants locating in South Hill have helped to diversify manufacturing operations in the Town since 1970. A variety of products are manufactured in the plastics, metal, and wood industries. Southern Linen Service, a national linen service company, will locate in the Interstate Industrial Park. Jones Apparel, Rex Roto, Narricott, Virginia Quilting and IVC have all expanded since locating to South Hill.



Figure 2: Expansion at Narricott Industries on Montgomery Street

The increased presence of diversified manufacturing helps stabilize the local economy and is a result of coordinated efforts of several economic development organizations. In the 1980's the South Hill Community Development Association with the Industrial Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce successfully completed the State Certification Program. South Hill's Industrial Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce,

in coordination with the Mecklenburg County Economic Development Office, have developed an area attractive to business.

**Major Employers
2005
South Hill
(In no particular order)**

Company	Product
BGF Industries	Glass Fiber Yarn
Narricot Industries	Webbing, Seat Belts, Air Bags
VQC, Inc.	Commercial Window Treatments
International Veneer Co., Inc.	Fine Wood Veneers
Jones Apparel Group	Distribution Center
Rex Roto, Inc.	Heat Application Systems
M & B Metal Products	Metal Hangers
Parker Oil Company	Oil & Gas Distributor
Peebles, Inc.	Corporate Office, Warehouse, & Retail Store
Community Memorial Health Center	Hospital and Health Services
Wal-Mart	Retail
Carlisle Motion Control	Brakes

Enterprise Zones

In 1985 the Town received a Virginia Enterprise Zone designation on an area in the southwest section of town generally along West Danville Street and including the South Hill Industrial Park. This action was very successful in attracting business and revitalizing the area. The Industrial Park is now full and other sites have been developed as industrial parks. In 1995 a second zone, this one a joint endeavor with Mecklenburg County and the Town of La Crosse, was approved. Under this program existing and new businesses in the Zone are eligible to receive location incentives (see Map Exhibit 2). The Town, in addition to the Commonwealth and the County, also offers incentives such as the following:

Industrial Real Estate Discount

To qualify for Industrial Real Estate Discount of 50% off the listed price of the property, new businesses locating within the Interstate Industrial Park must have at least \$10 million private investment and create a minimum of 100 full-time jobs as defined by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Economic Stimulus Grant

- To qualify new businesses must create a minimum of 50 full-time jobs.
- Recipients of the Economic Stimulus Grant are ineligible to receive Job Grants

A four year stimulus grant based on the machinery & tools tax payments

Year	Amount
1	100%
2	75%
3	50%
4	25%

Job Grants

Businesses locating in the zone are eligible for a grant of \$400 per job as long as 15 to 50 full-time jobs are created within thirty days.

Waiver of Business License Tax

Businesses locating in the zone will have Business License Tax waived for three years from the start of business or up to the expiration of the zone provided that 10 full-time jobs are created.

Waiver of Building Permit Fees

Businesses locating in the zone will have building permit fees waived if 10 full-time jobs are created.

Waiver of Water and Sewer Connection Fees

Water and sewer connection fees will be waived for businesses locating in the zone if 10 full-time jobs are created.

Reduced Water and Sewer Costs

Reduced water and sewer costs by 15 percent for users of over one million gallons per month for businesses locating in the zone.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Promote a climate that is friendly to business and industry.

Actions

- A. The Town should ensure an adequate supply of water, sewage treatment capacity, and natural gas to accommodate industrial, commercial, and residential growth.
- B. The Town should continue to promote economic activity around the lakes involving fishing tournaments and other recreational activities.
- C. The Town should continue to work with local businesses to revitalize the downtown area to insure a progressive image. This can be enhanced for those businesses located in the downtown zone by taking advantage of the special programs such as the Retail Incentives and other programs to promote economic development.
- D. The Town should promote the development of a high speed internet system for its industries, businesses, and residential areas.
- E. The Town should promote the purchase and occupancy of vacant businesses in the downtown and other commercial areas.
- F. Continue to promote the concept of the Farmer’s Market.

- G. Support the operation of the Tobacco Farm Life Museum, the Virginia S. Evans Doll Museum, and the model railroad museum.
- H. Continue to support existing retail and commercial endeavors.
- I. Look at a property maintenance ordinance for businesses which has the following goal: To ensure that business owners and downtown merchants maintain their properties inside and out in a professional and attractive manner to encourage consumers to shop the downtown area.

Downtown Revitalization

Overview

Revitalization projects help to boost economic initiatives with the elimination of blight, creating attractive aesthetics in these areas and entice new businesses, industries, and residents. The economic impact can be astounding with development of small businesses and entrepreneurial enterprise, said to be the backbone of our economy. The clustering of similar businesses tends to attract other related companies to locate in that particular area. The retail/commercial businesses bring shoppers, recreational activities attract visitors and tourists, and lofts/ apartments attract residents to live in these areas – all boosting the local economy by bringing tax revenues and tourist dollars to the area. This environment, along with a solid industry base, constitutes the building blocks of a strong, diversified economy.

History and Current Use

The downtown area of the Town of South Hill sits at the crossroads of two thoroughfares, U.S. Route 1 and U.S. Route 58. The intersection of these two highways marks the traditional point of the heart of the Town's origins. U. S. Route 1 was built through the South Hill area in approximately 1926 with U.S. Route 58 following in the 1930s. Downtown South Hill grew around these two transportation routes.

Although the downtown area is no longer experiencing the economic boom of the early 20th century, the downtown's historic structures still convey the story of a small agricultural town's development into a booming twentieth century municipality. Downtown is characterized with a mixture of one- and two-story commercial and public use structures that front on a traditional grid layout. The majority of the downtown area has sidewalks, street lighting, public use areas and landscaping. Other uses on the periphery include a wide mix of service/retail located in converted residential structures. Several vacant buildings and lots constitute a potential for creative infill development. All necessary action should be taken to assist in preserving and revitalizing the downtown area which is so important to the history of the Town of South Hill. It is critical that the downtown area be revitalized in order to enhance its architectural character and attractiveness to visitors.

Future Use

The Downtown area has been brought to the forefront throughout the planning and revitalization efforts of the Town. Continued revitalization of the downtown will enable South Hill to best compete with the newer business areas along West Route 58 and I-85 by capitalizing on its own unique attributes. These include historic storefronts, strong office/professional presence, and an attractive pedestrian environment.

It should be recognized that the downtown area is unlikely to recapture the high traffic, high volume retail activity now centered along the main commercial corridors. New large-scale commercial development should be directed to vacant land and infill sites near the community's existing shopping centers and commercial corridors. With the exception of several small infill sites, there is limited space for commercial expansion along the downtown corridors. Consequently, the Town must continue to promote the continued viability of its older commercial centers through emphasis on small business development, historic preservation, and other revitalization activities.

In order to reinforce these qualities, the Plan offers several recommendations. The overall objective for the downtown areas of the Town is to encourage a mix of compatible, complementary uses, with less dominance by a single land use type. Ideally, the downtown environments should include more residents living above storefronts and in other suitable spaces that become vacant or underutilized. Of great potential are structures with architectural appeal that can be adapted as affordable apartments, studios, or live-work spaces.

Recommendations

- Establish a Historic District in the Downtown area from Franklin and Mecklenburg Avenue to West Danville Street and Plank Road
- When feasible, acquire rights to buildings identified as having potential redevelopment value and working with a private non-profit organization to facilitate reuse
- Apply for state and federal funding to continue the revitalization process in the Downtown area
- Identify and establish a relationship with potential developers
- Pursue the development of downtown housing (apartments, studios, or live-work spaces)
- Target large, vacant buildings for redevelopment; including but not limited to
 - ✓ The Lincoln Hotel
 - ✓ Boyd Honda Building
 - ✓ The Crowder Building
 - ✓ Exchange Warehouse
 - ✓ Guler Warehouse
 - ✓ Grocery Deals
- Establish a Downtown Large Structure Incentive Plan
- Establish a Downtown Technology Zone

Community Facilities

Recreation

The Community Facilities map (see Map Exhibit 3) depicts the location of major community facilities. Two of the County's schools, South Hill Elementary School and South Hill Primary School, are located in the Town. Other public facilities include the Town Hall complex, fire station and the new R. T. Arnold Library. The Centennial Park is located at the center of South Hill and includes playground structures, a picnic shelter, tennis courts, and a lighted baseball field. Parker Park is located on Halifax Street. This 60-acre park has multi-purpose fields for softball, baseball, football, soccer, and three basketball courts. Long-range plans include constructing jogging trails and an amphitheater.

The Town is engaging in a planning effort to further develop the areas at Parker Park. This effort will also possibly identify other areas that can be developed for park areas within the Town. In addition, significant renovations to Centennial Park have occurred thanks to the efforts of the Centennial Committee, the Junior Woman's Club, the Rose Hill Garden Club, the Town, and the community as a whole. Additions include a new Centennial Monument which refurbished the retaining wall along the tennis courts, repaving of the tennis courts, replacement of an old wooden bandstand with a gazebo, and improvements to the footbridge area.

Other recreational opportunities include a local chapter of the YMCA, a Tae Kwon Do school, a miniature golf course and arcade, and a two screen movie theater.

The survey showed a definite desire for an auditorium / fine arts building and / or recreation center. The lack of auditorium space has been cited by numerous groups. Such a facility would be an asset when bringing in new industries as well as for the existing population. Currently the only usable auditorium in South Hill is in the Elementary School. Meeting space for large groups is also at a premium in the town and county. According to the survey respondents, the most desired recreational facility lacking in the area was a bowling alley.

There is an effort underway, led by the Community Development Association, to renovate and restore the Colonial Theater Building on South Mecklenburg Avenue. The theater auditorium can accommodate several hundred people, and there is room in the front of the building for offices and classrooms. The redevelopment of the Colonial Theater would add a lot of activity to the downtown area, providing economic benefits to downtown and furthering the quality of life in the community by providing needed space for performing arts, meetings, or other auditorium needs.

Emergency Services

Fire protection is provided locally by the South Hill Volunteer Fire Department. The organization has well trained members, including several Emergency Medical Technicians. The County has a Hazardous Materials Response Team that includes members of the South Hill Department. The Department has three trucks with pumping capacities between 1250-1750 gallons per minute and has earned a fire insurance rating of 5. In addition, the Fire Department in cooperation with the Town has refurbished the ladder truck, with delivery expected in the summer of 2005.

The Southside Rescue Squad is located in South Hill on West Atlantic Street. The organization is well-staffed with emergency medical technicians who include cardiac technicians, shock trauma specialists, and paramedics. The squad is adequately equipped with emergency service vehicles.

The South Hill Police Department provides 24-hour protection to the community, including a 24-hour local dispatch center. The Police Department currently employs 20 sworn officers. The Police Department also provides animal control service to the Town through the use of a part-time animal control officer.

The Community Memorial Healthcenter, which is not affiliated directly with the Town, is a 284-bed facility with a 24-hour / 7-day per week emergency care unit that serves citizens from South Hill, Mecklenburg County, and three other surrounding counties. A new oncology service is available at CMH in conjunction with Duke Hospital in Durham, NC. A mobile MRI unit and a mobile catherization unit are on site.

Municipal Services

In 1996 the Town Offices were relocated to Mecklenburg Avenue. In an adaptive reuse project, the former Leggett's Department Store was remodeled to house the Council Chambers, Town Manager, Treasurer, Building Inspector, and administrative staff. The Police Department gained use of the entire building on West Atlantic Street. The Bailey Public Works Building on Main Street houses the Town's maintenance crews and equipment.

Garbage collection is a fee for service provided to both commercial and residential sites within the corporate limits. Commercial refuse pick-up can be up to six days per week; residential pick-up is twice weekly. The commercial fee includes dumpster rental as well as collection and disposal. The trash is carried to the County landfill.

The Town of South Hill maintains its own streets within the corporate limits. As a part of the state's "Urban System," the town receives reimbursement from the state for a portion of the street maintenance costs. The Town maintenance department does all the work themselves with the exception of paving which is done contractually. All new developments must construct the streets to Virginia Department of Transportation

requirements in order for the town to accept the roads into their system. New roads not in connection with a development would have to be placed on VDOT's Six Year Improvement Plan to be constructed by the state on a cost share basis with the Town.

The fine performance of these groups adds to the excellent quality of living, attractive to business and industry as well as residents.

Schools & Education

While the school system is under the jurisdiction and direction of the county, the residents of the town of South Hill are also citizens of Mecklenburg County and use the county schools; therefore, questions regarding education were included in the survey. As a result of the survey and the citizen committee, a "vision" was formulated and suggested actions were developed. Recognizing that the ultimate responsibility of our children's future lies with the county, the following are set forth as suggestions:

VISION

The South Hill schools are well staffed with quality personnel, but facilities need extensive improvements. We envision a modern facility with quality staff that will continue to provide opportunities for all students to develop to their fullest potential. This is vital to further economic development in South Hill. The success of this vision requires a shared responsibility, including the community, parents, school personnel, and students.

The advancement of South Hill's economic growth is directly related to education. South Hill needs to begin improving our educational facilities. We need an immediate effort to provide for a new elementary school, continued maintenance at all school facilities, the implementation of after school activities, the expansion of academic programs, and the encouragement of more community involvement. Construction has begun on a new elementary school in South Hill which will replace the two existing buildings, South Hill Primary and South Hill Elementary. This project is to be finished for the start of the 2005 school year.

Methods suggested by the committee to improve the education system were the following:

- Construct a new elementary school in South Hill [replacing the two existing buildings – S.H. Primary and Elementary]
- Budget for continued maintenance at all school facilities, with specific focus on Park View Middle School and Park View Senior High School
- Implement after school academic activities
 - Creation of clubs such as Homework Club, Science Club, Computer Club, and Art Club
 - Provide transportation using late buses
 - Extend availability of school facilities
 - Provide instructional personnel
 - Provide SAT improvement courses

- Improvement of vocational programs
 - Expand opportunity for student participation
 - Construct a centrally located vocation center for the county

- Increase and encourage community involvement
 - Attract students from local colleges for non-paid internships
 - Involve senior citizens and available parents
 - Involve businesses and corporate volunteers
 - Installation of computers at the R. T. Arnold Library

The Mecklenburg County Business-Education Partnership has led the effort to increase the cooperation between the business community and the school system. In addition, computers have been installed at the R. T. Arnold Library for the use of the public, partially through funding from the Gates Foundation and from contributions from MicroSolutions, Inc. The Advanced Knowledge Center has a Cyber Café which is open to the public. An Advanced Manufacturing dual enrollment program is being offered at the Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center.

The Mecklenburg County School Board is also pursuing the construction of a new elementary school facility for the South Hill area.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS

After the completed construction of the new Elementary School the Town is encouraged to discuss with the school board a plan for the use of the old school buildings.

The Centennial Park should continue to be maintained as a playground and picnic area to be enjoyed by the community. At the same time, the new Parker Park 60 acre complex should be developed in accordance with the capital improvement plan currently under review by the Town. As recommended in the study, new access roads connecting the park to Plank Road and Highway 47 should be implemented. An extension of Raleigh Avenue is in VDOT's Six Year Capital Improvement Program, which would accomplish this. The extension would be from West Atlantic Street to West Danville Street. These community facilities act as an attraction as well as an enhancement for development and will impact future growth and land use decisions.

RECREATION GOALS

Encourage the development of recreational opportunities in the Town.

Actions

- A. Support the development of YMCA facilities and activities.

- B. Promote the development of a public pool, possibly by the YMCA.

C. Build an access road from Plank Road to Parker Park and from Parker Park to Route 47 to improve egress and ingress to the park. This is necessary to accommodate the expanded usage of this complex now and in the future.

D. Promote the expansion of sports leagues to include all age groups and consider creating a part-time position for a summer activity director for the parks.

E. Continue the development of Parker Park in accordance with the capital improvement plan under development.

F. Continue working with Civic Organizations to install additional playground equipment at Centennial Park.

G. Upgrade and refurbish the picnic area at Centennial Park.

H. Maintain the present athletic field at Centennial Park for daylight use.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES GOALS

Commit to a High Level of Public Services

Actions

A. Promote a progressive recycling program with collection of plastic, glass, newspapers, etc.

B. Continue a leaf collection program and offer leaves to citizens.

C. Recommend that the Town strictly enforce ordinances relating to litter control, and encourage litter control efforts through Adopt – a – Street and other programs.

D. Enforce town ordinances relating to the proper upkeep and maintenance of property in South Hill.

E. Recommend that the County enclose the dumpster and recycling sites within the Town limits.

EDUCATION GOALS

South Hill should continue to work with the local school systems to enhance the educational environment.

Actions:

A. Improvement and expansion of the vocational and technical programs, including the Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center downtown.

B. Continue to encourage the completion of the construction and consolidation of the Primary and Elementary schools currently underway by the County.

C. Encourage community involvement in the education process.

D. Encourage and support various organizations in their efforts to increase community-wide literacy, such as LEARN, which provides support in combating adult illiteracy.

Infrastructure

Water Systems

The Town owns and operates its water supply system. The Town has access to a capacity of 4.0 gallons per day. Current average daily use is over one million gallons per day. The storage capacity of the Town has been improved by recent capital improvements, including the construction of a 500,000 gallon water tank near the Northside Industrial Park off North Mecklenburg Avenue, and a 500,000 gallon water tank in La Crosse, which is shared with La Crosse and Brodnax. The Roanoke River Service Authority constructed a 1,000,000 gallon water tank at Big Fork.

Due to the pressure of industrial expansion and water supply problems in the area, the Town of South Hill commissioned a feasibility study regarding the expansion of their water treatment capacity. The preliminary engineering report covered water treatment and distribution facilities to serve the Town, the Department of Corrections institutions, and a larger study area which generally included Mecklenburg County's towns and surrounding areas, as well as the area around and southeast of the Bracey interchange on Interstate 85. The study concluded that a regional water distribution system was a valid consideration and designed a phased plan of development. Phase I is the construction of the water main to the prisons. South Hill and the Department of Corrections entered into



an agreement whereby the Town constructed a water main to serve the Correctional Unit #4 at Baskerville and the Mecklenburg Maximum Security facility at Boydton. This service was completed in October of 1996. Park View Middle and Senior High Schools were connected to the Town's system in concert with the prison water line expansion.

In the summer of 2002, the Town of South Hill began buying bulk treated water from the Roanoke River Service Authority, and discontinued the use of South Hill Water Works. The Roanoke River Service Authority has finished a 4.0 MGD plant serving the Towns of South Hill, Brodnax, Boydton, and La Crosse as well as the Bracey area. The Authority also has a withdrawal permit from Lake Gaston up to 10 MGD. In addition to supplying water to the Town of South Hill, the Authority is under contract with the Town to construct a 16" water main through the town from the South Hill Industrial Park area along Danville Street to the

Figure 3: Fire Hydrant at High Street and Poplar Lane. Replacement of the 2" water line with a 6" water line enabled the extension of fire protection in this area.

eastern side of Town, in order to provide better access for Authority water to reach the Towns of La Crosse and Brodnax.

The Town is also making an effort in the water distribution system to upgrade small lines and install hydrants in order to provide

better water pressure and increased fire protection. Examples of upgrades in the last couple of years include sections of West High Street, Valley Road, Green Hill Road, and Cook Lane.

Wastewater Systems

La Crosse, Brodnax, and South Hill are served by a regional wastewater treatment plant located in South Hill. The 2.0 million gallon per day treatment plant was completed in 1996 and was constructed primarily with loans and grant funding assistance from the Economic Development Administration and the Farmer's Home Administration. This regional system constructed lines connecting and combining the sewer systems of the towns, eliminating many separate septic tanks and sand filter systems. The construction of the new treatment plant eliminated a pollution problem from the old trickling filter system which discharged into Flat Creek, a tributary of Lake Gaston.

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

<u>Town</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Calendar Year 2002 (avg. GPD)</u>
South Hill	1,850,000*	655,800
La Crosse	100,000*	24,800
Brodnax	50,000*	21,500

* All three towns share the South Hill Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, which has a capacity of 2,000,000 gallons per day.

The Town has completed a number of water distribution and sewer maintenance projects and has identified the following in its' new Capital Improvement Plan:

Department	Request
<i>Fire Department</i>	<i>Fire Department Addition</i>
Street Maintenance	Sidewalk on Lombardy Street
<i>Street Maintenance</i>	<i>Curb and Gutter on Lunenburg Avenue</i>
Parks Maintenance	Parker Park Ballfields Phase II
Parks Maintenance	Parker Park access road to Raleigh Avenue
Parks Maintenance	Add Parking to Centennial Park
Street Maintenance	Downtown Revitalization Phase II & III
<i>Street Maintenance</i>	<i>Raleigh Avenue Extension</i>
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer from Taylor's Creek Lagoon to Pump Station
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer from E. Ferrell St. to Taylor's Creek Lagoon

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Sewer Conveyance	Binford Street Pump Station Upgrade
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer on 6 th Street R. O. W.
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer Lombardy Street to T. C. Lagoon
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer W. High St. to Thomas St.
Sewer Conveyance	Slip-Line Sewer Thomas St. to Sunset Lane
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer Sunset Lane to Mt. Creek
Sewer Conveyance	Mountain Creek Upgrades
Water Distribution	Replace 2" Water main N. West St., Park View
Water Distribution	Replace 2" Water main Franklin St.
Water Distribution	Replace 2" Water main South Hill Ave to 7 th St.
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer High St. & Ridge to Lunenburg Ave.
Sewer Conveyance	Slip-Line Sewer W. Main St. to Atlantic to R.O.W.
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer Jet Flushing Machine
Sewer Conveyance	Install Sewer Line from Hardee Ford to 58 By-pass
Sewer Conveyance	Replace Sewer Plank & Thomas to Hillcrest

The revised CIP reflects the budgetary constraints of completing projects. Other projects that should be considered for future CIP implementation are as follows:

<i>Parks Maintenance</i>	<i>Parker Park access road to Raleigh Avenue</i>
<i>Water Distribution</i>	<i>Poplar Lane Water Main Upgrade from 2" to 8".</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Slip-Line Sewer from Academy Lane to Jubilee Drive</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Replace Sewer main near Lunenburg Avenue</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Install Gravity Sewer near U. S. 1 N. and Alpine Road</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Install Pumps and Power to activate area 2 pump station</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Replace Pumps and Add Generator in E. Ferrell St. Pump Station</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Install New Sewer from W. Danville St. to Estes Drive</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Replace Sewer from N. Mecklenburg to Lombardy St.</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Replace Sewer in Kennedy Street area</i>
<i>Sewer Conveyance</i>	<i>Slip-Line from Roanoke Ave. to S. H. Ave.</i>



Figure 4: 2000 Bond Projects - Sewer Line Near U. S. 58 Bypass

The South Hill Regional Wastewater Treatment plant is in generally good condition. The Town has upgraded treatment process to use ultraviolet light for disinfection rather than gaseous chlorine in order to decrease the use of chlorine at the treatment plant. This change would require a substantial capital investment.

WATER AND SEWER GOALS

To continue development of infrastructure to provide for the planned growth of the area.

Actions

- A. Expand sewage treatment facilities, if demand warrants.
- B. Continue the Town's program of identifying and upgrading water lines and sewer lines as identified in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Transportation

As the Town's history indicates, the area's growth is and has been determined by the capacity, direction and condition of its thoroughfare system. The Town is served by Interstate Highway 85, and major arterial roads U. S. Route 58 (east – west), U. S. Route 1 (north – south), and Virginia Route 47 (east – west). South Hill is additionally served by the Mecklenburg – Brunswick Regional Airport, located off U. S. Route 58 east of town.

When the N&D Railroad was abandoned from Lawrenceville in neighboring Brunswick County to Clarksville, the South Hill IDA purchased the right-of-way from the Airport Industrial Park to the South Hill western town limits. The Town is participating in the Rails to Trails Program. This property offers numerous possibilities for road access, greenways, transmission or utility lines.

In 2002 the U. S. 58 Bypass was completed by the Virginia Department of Transportation around South Hill from the interchange with Interstate 85 to the area just west of the South Hill Industrial Park. Included in the project was a reconstruction of the intersection between Country Lane, East Atlantic Street, and U. S. 58; a new interchange between Goode's Ferry Road and U. S. 58; and an at-grade interchange between Maple Lane / Butts Street and U. S. 58. Recently the Town and the Virginia Department of Transportation have extended Raleigh Avenue between Forest Hill Drive and West Atlantic Street and Maple Lane between Main Street and the new U. S. 58.



Figure 5: U. S. 58 Bypass as seen from Goode's Ferry Road

The Town of South Hill recently submitted comments to the Virginia Department of Transportation for their review in their South Hill 2020 Transportation Plan, after reviewing VDOT's proposals for this area. The projects submitted by the Town include the following:

<u>Recommended Project</u>	<u>Estimated cost (year 2000 dollars)</u>
Add pedestrian phase to the traffic signal at the intersection of Atlantic Street and Hammer Street	\$24,000
Install traffic signal at the intersection of Shaw Street and Atlantic Street, as warranted	\$180,000
Install traffic signal at the intersection of North Mecklenburg Avenue and Ferrell Street, as warranted	\$180,000
Raleigh Avenue extension between West Atlantic Street and West Danville Street	\$3,150,000
Raleigh Avenue extension between West Danville Street and Goode's Ferry Road	\$3,465,000

In addition, the Town has extended Mecklenburg Avenue from its current end on Danville Street through to Virginia Street, and has installed a stoplight at the new intersection of Mecklenburg Avenue and Danville Street. This project is part of the

overall effort by the Town at downtown revitalization. The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Town will be evaluating the impact of this extension on the traffic patterns in the area, particularly at the intersection of Virginia Avenue and South Hill Avenue, to see if any further projects need to be included in the 2020 Transportation Plan.

As a note, the project to extend Raleigh Avenue between West Atlantic Street and West Danville Street is in the Capital Improvement Plan. The project to extend Raleigh Street from West Danville Street to Goode’s Ferry Road is a project that the Town is required to submit to VDOT as a high priority by the annexation agreement between Mecklenburg County and the Town of South Hill.

In addition, the Town will be requesting that VDOT include the following transportation projects in its Southside Regional Long Range Transportation Plan and the Urban Construction Plan:

<i>Proposed Project</i>	<i>Cost Estimate 2006 Dollars</i>
<i>Extension of Rte. 138 from Rte. 1 N. to Hammer Street</i>	<i>\$5,900,000</i>
<i>Extension of Ferrell Street to Rte. 138 connector.</i>	<i>\$513,000</i>
<i>Connection of Alpine Road and Thompson Street.</i>	<i>\$1,900,000</i>
<i>Extension of Shaw Street to Thompson Street</i>	<i>\$2,300,000</i>
<i>Extension of Clover Road at Rte. 1 N. to Rte. 138 connector.</i>	<i>\$1,860,000</i>
<i>Extension of Northington Street to Rte. 138 connector road.</i>	<i>\$135,000</i>
<i>Extension of Opie Road from Plank Road to Danville Street</i>	<i>\$513,000</i>
<i>Extension of Locust Street from Westover Avenue to Goodes Ferry Road</i>	<i>\$1,377,000</i>
<i>Extension of Bailey Street to Betty Lane</i>	<i>\$3,402,000</i>
<i>Extension of Bailey Street from Rte. 1&58 to Plank Road</i>	<i>\$460,000</i>
<i>Extension of McCracken Street to Maple Lane</i>	<i>\$486,000</i>
<i>Raleigh Avenue Extension from West Danville Street to Goodes Ferry Road</i>	<i>\$3,465,000</i>

The Transportation Committee of the Town’s Visioning group discussed and studied the present and future transportation needs of South Hill. The groups findings provide an excellent background and are incorporated herein. In order to address both

the present and future transportation needs of South Hill, this committee examined various modes of transportation.

- pedestrian traffic
- bicycle traffic
- wheelchair and handicapped traffic
- vehicular traffic (both private and public)

The Committee also studied the annexation proposal that at the time of the Visioning Study was before the Mecklenburg County Board of Supervisors. The Town and County came to an agreement on the annexation, which became effective January 1, 2001. A map of the newly annexed areas is included here for reference as Map Exhibit 1.

Pedestrian Traffic

In an area of expanding population, such as South Hill, pedestrian traffic should always be considered an important issue when developing transportation strategies. The citizens committee identified several specific areas where a high level of pedestrian traffic is common and improvement should be accomplished. These improvements are shown on Map Exhibit 4, and described below:

1. Downtown, along Mecklenburg Avenue and West Danville Street:

The greatest concentration of pedestrian traffic is in the downtown area along Mecklenburg Avenue and West Danville Street. In general, the area is adequately equipped with sidewalks for the pedestrian traffic. Some improvements could be made with the identification of crosswalks, relining of crosswalks, etc. Also, better accessibility needs to be accomplished to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act standard for handicapped persons.

The citizens group recommended that the curbing at the sidewalks be adapted for handicap access whenever any type of street improvement or repair is being accomplished and a schedule for such improvements are adopted for areas in which no general construction is being planned.

Since the adoption of the 1997 edition of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town has replaced sidewalks in the downtown area in the 100 block of North Mecklenburg Avenue, along South Mecklenburg Avenue between Atlantic Street and Main Street, and along East Atlantic Street from Mecklenburg Avenue to an area just beyond Brooke Avenue. The Town would like to also replace the sidewalks along West Danville Street west of the intersection with South Mecklenburg Avenue, preferably in conjunction with the downtown revitalization efforts currently underway.

The Downtown Revitalization Committee efforts have also completed several improvements for pedestrians in the downtown area. This includes putting bump outs along Mecklenburg Avenue to facilitate pedestrian traffic across the street.

2. E. Ferrell St., Lombardy St., and McCracken Street: Improvements are currently in planning stage.

There is sufficient pedestrian traffic along the corridor from Mecklenburg Avenue down East Ferrell Street to Lombardy Street and along Lombardy Street / McCracken Street to West Atlantic Street to warrant the installation of sidewalks along one side of these streets. Given the location of the U. S. Post Office, the Community Memorial Healthcenter Leggett Center, the proximity of multi-family housing in the area, and the current construction of Beaver Creek housing development, pedestrian traffic will continue to increase. Additional pedestrian traffic will also be generated by the expansion of the trailer court on Lombardy Street.

3. Chaptico Road, Buena Vista Circle, Thomas Street, West High Street:

The Community Memorial Health Center has experienced tremendous growth in recent years and is currently South Hill's largest employer. There is a great deal of pedestrian traffic surrounding the hospital and the surrounding offices and support facilities. The area could benefit from the construction of sidewalks along the primary arteries leading to and around the Health Center. This would include Chaptico Road from North Mecklenburg Avenue to Buena Vista Circle, West High Street from North Mecklenburg Avenue to North Thomas Street, and North Thomas Street and Buena Vista Circle from West Atlantic Street to Chaptico Road.

4. East Atlantic Street:

The virtual explosion of vehicular traffic and commercial development on East Atlantic Street along the "Golden Mile" has spawned a proportional growth in pedestrian traffic. In addition to the normal population of residents shopping at the various establishments, the numbers of tourists frequenting the area is increasing. The tournament fishermen and their families, migrant farm workers, and bus loads of tourists traveling through the area are constantly seen along this stretch of roadway. There is currently no provision for pedestrian traffic in the area. Frequently groups of pedestrians can be seen crossing East Atlantic Street at various points in heavily congested traffic conditions. This is certainly a potentially dangerous situation.

The installation of a pedestrian phase to the traffic signal at Hammer Street and Atlantic Street is being studied by VDOT for inclusion in their upcoming construction plans. The Town should encourage VDOT to do this as quickly as possible.

In addition, the Planning Commission recommends that the feasibility of pedestrian improvements from the intersection of East Atlantic Street, Country Lane, and the new Route 58 Bypass over Interstate 85 to the commercial areas of eastern South Hill be considered.

With regard to sidewalks and pedestrian traffic, the installation of park benches at strategic points along the sidewalks of the town to provide a resting place for the pedestrians was suggested.

Bicycle Traffic

Given the growth trend of the population in South Hill, it is not anticipated that bicycle traffic will increase in the near future to the point where special consideration need be given to it. No “bike lanes” or such are recommended at this time.

Public Transportation Systems

The Town is currently served by the Lake Country Area Agency on Aging bus system, which provides a demand response service for citizens in the area. The service is currently available to all citizens from 8:15 Am to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday. The system is currently transporting 8500 riders per year with one vehicle and is at capacity. The Town is urged to continue its support of this needed transportation alternative.

The Town is currently served by one taxi service. The development of more and better taxi services should be encouraged by the Town. As the community grows and the number of tourists and business people visiting increases, this will become increasingly important. The Town should adopt a set of standards for the operation of such a service. These standards should include criteria for cleanliness of vehicles, training of the drivers, standard rates, etc. Such standards will probably limit the number of taxi services; however, this could also serve to ensure the profitability of the operators who are willing to adhere to such standards.

Private Vehicular Transportation

The problems associated with truck and car traffic within the Town offer the greatest challenge in the transportation area. South Hill does not have big city problems such as traffic jams or snarls but for those living here this type of congestion is just as real. The Bypass has diverted some congestion problems in the downtown areas, but other initiatives could promote better traffic flow throughout the town and prepare for future growth. Alternative primary arteries of traffic around the periphery of the town were considered to be a major concern.

Although the U. S. 58 Bypass project is relatively new and the full effects are probably not apparent yet, the highway has seemed to divert a good deal of truck traffic away from the downtown area. The downtown revitalization plan includes several ideas affecting the flow of traffic in the downtown area, most notably a direct connection between South Mecklenburg Avenue and South Hill Avenue.

Another area of consideration of the committee centered on growth. Significant development is already advancing on the North end of Town and annexation plans should

promote further growth in this direction. To provide for a cohesive flow of resident traffic from various parts of town, some possible solutions are listed below.

- Powell Drive to Route 1 North:

There are several possible alternatives to provide access from the end of East Ferrell Street and Powell Drive to the north end of town. The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Town of South Hill are working together to build an industrial access road to serve the portion of the Northside Industrial Park east of North Mecklenburg Avenue, and depending on the layout and on funding, a connection could be provided to Powell Drive. In addition, some access through this area has been gained by the construction of Beaver Creek Drive.

- Route 643 and 754

The annexation of the majority of land east of I-85 was not approved as part of the annexation agreement between the Town and Mecklenburg County, although the Town does now include the land around the intersection of I-85 and U. S. 1 and land between Thompson Street and the Interstate. Any connection between Thompson Street and Alpine Road would be constructed out-of-town. However, the Town, the County, or the Department of Transportation should maintain consideration of the possible connection between U. S. 1 North and U. S. 58 East as a viable project.

- Parker Park

Another problem area within the Town is ingress / egress from Parker Park. The park is an outstanding facility that is providing a greatly needed service to the community. However, with the growth in usage, the problem of traffic has increased to the point where a solution must be found. The Virginia Department of Transportation is currently in the process of designing the extension of Raleigh Avenue between West Atlantic Street and West Danville Street. The park should be connected to this extension, providing an outlet on the other side of the park from Halifax Street.

- Moseley Lane

During the public forum meeting, other suggestions were submitted by the citizens of the Town with regard to the addition or improvement of various streets. One such suggestion was the extension of Moseley Lane to Thomas Street. This extension would provide the Moseley Street neighborhood with another means of ingress / egress from the area and improve the traffic flow in this somewhat confined area.

The “net effect” of the addition of roads that the committee has recommended to be built can be seen on Map Exhibit 5. With the 58 Bypass and the Raleigh Avenue extension, the new streets would provide a network of alternative conduits for residential traffic around the perimeter of the Town. Access to various areas of the Town could be accomplished without adding to the congestion of the “main” roads, Route 58 and Route 1. Another advantage to be realized with the addition of these streets would be the opening of access to undeveloped areas within the town. These undeveloped areas could then be developed for single or multi-family housing or for commercial or industrial purposes.

Transportation, like education, is vitally important to economic development. Just as the economy can not grow without an education system which produces an adequate supply of well-educated workers, a good transportation system in and around the Town is necessary to support this growth.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS

The studies by the Traffic Committee indicated that there is still a need for an arterial system in town which would facilitate the movement of local traffic through town. This would encourage development of all types of land by making it more accessible.

Improve vehicular traffic flows throughout the Town and address present and future needs.

Actions:

- A. Support the Virginia Department of Transportation’s efforts to extend Raleigh Avenue from East Atlantic Street through West Danville Street (connecting with Parker Park) and from West Danville Street to Goode’s Ferry Road.

Improve pedestrian traffic around highly congested areas.

Actions:

- A. Build additional sidewalks around Community Memorial Healthcenter on Thomas Street. Also, on Ferrell Street from Route 1 to Mecklenburg Manor and from Ferrell Street along Lombardy and McCracken Streets to East Atlantic as per the Transportation Subcommittee’s recommendations.
- B. Continue efforts to renovate existing sidewalks.
- C. Implement the recommendations of the Downtown Revitalization Committee to improve the flow of traffic in the downtown area.
- D. Install pedestrian phase signals at the intersection of Hammer Street and East Atlantic Street.

Continue to Encourage Development of Public and Private Means of Transportation in the area.

Actions:

- A. Continue to support the Lake Country Area on Agings' LAB Bus project currently in service in the area.
- B. Also encourage private companies to provide a well-run, dependable taxi service to the area.

Future Land Use Plan

Changes are taking place in South Hill. The economic growth of the town, industrially and commercially, in the last ten years has been dramatic. Several factors have made South Hill and the surrounding area attractive to new and relocating industry and businesses. Its strategic location on an excellent transportation network; its quality of life; low crime; recreational opportunities; and a receptive, forward-thinking business community have all contributed to this increased growth. The location of industrial parks with infrastructure in place and built to take advantage of the highway system have attracted several new companies in recent years. To continue this momentum a plan must be in place guiding growth in order to maintain the balance of residential, commercial, and industrial development. The Town of South Hill has recognized this and has taken several steps to address the future needs.

Two major factors affecting growth trends in South Hill and the surrounding area are the completion of the new U. S. 58 Bypass and the annexation agreement approved effective January 1, 2001. The property annexed into the town is anticipated to be a desirable location for new industrial and commercial business, and the town is working to construct the physical infrastructure to serve the areas. In addition, the town is providing or assisting to provide the police, fire protection, and rescue services needed to encourage growth in the area.

A joint meeting of the South Hill and Mecklenburg County Planning Commissions was held and a proposed future land use map was developed. The "Transition Zone" addresses the land adjacent to the town limits that may be affected by a boundary adjustment or by any land use change near the town. The following in the Town's "vision" for the future land use in these transition areas.

Transition Zones

ROUTE 1 NORTH

This area is in transition from a single-family residential area to commercial. This trend is being fueled by increased traffic on this main route a short distance from an interstate interchange. The area west of U. S. 1 has been recently annexed, and been zoned commercial for the first five hundred feet off the road. The installation of a pump station to make sewer service available in the area will act as a spur to development. The

area east of the road is already part of the Town, and the purchase by the Industrial Development Authority of 300+ acres to further develop the Northside Industrial Park will greatly impact this area.

Transportation, if not properly planned could also affect the development of this corridor. Road improvements, including increasing the number of travel lanes, should be considered as development occurs. In addition, it is also recommended that deceleration lanes be constructed should the traffic generated by a development warrant.

The Town should consider the construction of access roads in the area. Otherwise, valuable areas without road frontage will be landlocked, leaving tracts of undeveloped and undervalued land unless access roads are provided. This should become a top priority for the Capital Improvements Plan. The Town should consider constructing an access road through the area near the Veteran's of Foreign Wars building, possibly to connect to the new Industrial Access Road under construction by the Virginia Department of Transportation or, as an alternative, Powell Drive.

CHAPTICO ROAD

The Chaptico Road area is characterized by low-density, large lot single family housing. Unlike other transition zones this area is not experiencing a change in land use, but could be dramatically affected by surrounding development. A successful townhouse development has been built in the area, and the potential for further units is likely. The vacant land outside of town which is zoned agricultural by the County has the potential for incompatible land-uses that could negatively impact the residential areas. The Town envisions residential classifications consistent with the Town's zoning classifications continuing into these adjacent areas.

ROUTE 47 WEST

This area from Mecklenburg Avenue west toward Chase City is a mixed area consisting of smaller, older housing, with public and commercial buildings concentrated downtown and scattered out to the Town limits. This area is likely to continue to change from residential to commercial uses. As a result of the Highway 47 improvement project, the highway is experiencing increased traffic as a result of the employment opportunities and the retail areas in the Town of South Hill. Rezoning requests have been received due to the increase in commercial activity and will continue in that area. The Town should encourage this shift to business and therefore designate this area for commercial uses.

ROUTE 58 / US 1 SOUTH

This primarily commercial area, interspersed with a few residences and some vacant lots is an Enterprise Zone, and, as a result has shown considerable development.

Behind the commercial area fronting on the highway are several of the largest tracts within the town; however, these parcels lack access roads. Since these tracts are near water and sewer, and the Highway 58 Bypass, they are ideal for commercial and light industrial development. The town should develop a Capital Improvements Program which will provide for planned access roads to facilitate development in those areas.

GOODES FERRY ROAD

The new Highway 58 Bypass runs in a southwesterly direction from the east side of town to the intersection of Business 58 and Route 1 on the west side of town. The area bordering the bypass will be prime industrial and commercial land. The majority of land surrounding the bypass has been annexed by the Town, and construction of a sewer pump station is underway to provide availability of sewer to much of this area. The Town is also proposing an extension of Raleigh Avenue between West Danville Street and Goode's Ferry Road, which would open these lands to development.

The area near the access road at State Route 903 is residential and land in that immediate area acquired as a result of the annexation would lend itself to further residential zoning with the land west of that location bordering the bypass to the intersection with U. S. Route 1 and 58 zoned industrial and commercial. The land west of this intersection should be zoned commercial adjacent to the highway with residential transitional areas off U. S. Route 1 and 58.

ROUTE 58 EAST

In the 1960s on Route 58 (Atlantic Street) the "edge" of town was near McCracken Street. The growth spurt that occurred from the old "end of town" east to the Interstate as a result of the construction of Interstate 85 prompted the nickname "Golden Mile." This growth has spread to the east side of I-85 resulting in the new Wal-Mart Super Center, Arby's, Arnold's Diner and Rider's. The Highway 58 Improvement project, including the cloverleaf, will further enhance development in that corridor from the town limits to Brodnax.

MAPLE LANE

A brand-new three lane highway was finished between East Atlantic Street and the Route 58 Bypass where the Interstate Industrial Park (Butts Street) is located. Commercial development is foreseen for this corridor. The possibility of a stoplight at Maple and East Atlantic Street should be evaluated as the Maple Lane corridor develops.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Achieve a pattern of land use and development that reinforces and improves



the quality of life for the citizens and assists in achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan in Economic Development, Housing, Community Facilities, and Infrastructure.

Prepare and maintain a general plan of land use that will guide the development of South Hill and provide for the residential, commercial, and industrial needs of the town.

Figure 6: Transition Zone - Maple Lane

Actions

- A. Assure the availability of sufficient land for residential development to meet the needs of all socioeconomic levels.
- B. Encourage investment in South Hill by commercial and manufacturing organizations in order to provide a base for the future growth of South Hill.

Use the Land Use Map, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances as tools for protecting citizens and implementing the policies in the Comprehensive Plan to promote planned and orderly growth.

Actions

- A. Promote proactive zoning to ensure that land is developed appropriately and that growth is directed to areas of Town with sufficient services and where it will be comparable with existing land uses.
- B. Use the new zoning ordinance and the new site plan ordinance to regulate development within the town, making adjustments in the table of permitted uses or other regulations as necessary.
- C. Evaluate and revise as necessary the subdivision regulations of the town to ensure that developments meet appropriate standards and protect the Town by requiring properly constructed infrastructure.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

A. UDA Background

In order to accommodate future growth in ways that will conserve rural, undeveloped lands, minimize road and other infrastructure construction and maintenance costs, and provide healthy and walkable communities, § 15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia, jurisdictions with either (1) a population greater than 20,000 and a population growth rate greater than 5 percent or (2) a population growth rate greater than 15 percent over a ten-year period are required to designate one or more Urban Development Areas

(UDAs) through a Comprehensive Plan amendment. Based on these criteria, Mecklenburg County was required to meet the Commonwealth of Virginia's UDA requirements.

UDAs are areas planned for compact, mixed-use and walkable development, following the principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND). In order to achieve this, each designated UDA should meet minimum overall density requirements established in the legislation. Jurisdictions with a population of less than 130,000, such as Mecklenburg County, must accommodate an overall average density of 4 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) for single-family detached units, 6 du/acre for townhouses, 12 du/acre for multifamily housing, and a floor area ratio (FAR) of at least 0.4 for commercial development, or any "proportional combination" of residential and commercial uses that meets the density requirements.

In accordance with the Virginia UDA requirements, the boundaries and size of the Mecklenburg County's/South Hill's UDA shall be reexamined and, if necessary, revised every five years in conjunction with the review of the Comprehensive Plan and in accordance with the most recent population growth estimates and projections.

After an initial analysis of UDA potential, the County determined that the best location for a UDA is close to existing town centers. The Town of South Hill subsequently agreed to designate a UDA within Town boundaries that would satisfy the County's obligations under the UDA legislation.

While the UDA provides guidance for the types of land uses or land use patterns envisioned by the Town in this area, UDAs do not regulate land use. UDAs do not change existing underlying zoning, nor do they prevent a rezoning or development on the grounds that it is located outside of a UDA. However, UDAs do provide the additional option, if a property owner or developer chooses, to develop a property in a manner that meets the TND standards.

B. UDA Description

Location and Boundaries

Through a planning process that culminated in late 2011, the Town of South Hill identified one UDA that would accommodate Mecklenburg County's projected 20-year growth. This area was selected for the following reasons:

- The UDA constitutes a large assemblage of undeveloped land and a vacant property that is large enough to accommodate Mecklenburg County's projected 20-year population growth
- The UDA is centrally located close to downtown and major destinations, including the Community Memorial Healthcenter, and in close proximity to Interstate 85 and Route 58.

- The connected street grid, land uses and density of the surrounding area is compatible with the types of compact development encouraged in Urban Development Areas.

The UDA is generally bounded by Mecklenburg Avenue to the west, East Ferrell Street to the north, Franklin Street and Pleasant Street to the South, and Lombardy Street to the west. The UDA boundary lines follow property lines and are drawn to exclude existing developed properties along the perimeter of the UDA, while also following the existing power line easement to the east of the area. Existing land uses in the surrounding area include single-family detached housing and mobile homes, the Woodfield Club, a gas station, the First Baptist Church on Mecklenburg Avenue, and assorted commercial uses along East Ferrell and Lombardy Streets.

The designated UDA boundaries contain a total land area of 76 acres that is sufficient to accommodate projected 20-year population growth at the minimum required density of 4 dwelling units per acre for single-family detached housing, assuming 2.5 persons per residential unit and the additional land area required to accommodate employment uses, assuming 60 square feet per person and excluding industrial uses. The land area included in this calculation does not include 12 acres of land that is potentially environmentally-sensitive and unbuildable.

UDA Goals

As envisioned by the Town, the character of development in the UDA will be consistent with the principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND). TND is an approach to planning and designing neighborhoods that features compact community design, a mix of land uses and housing types, an interconnected network of streets, and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly street design. TND development patterns result in walkable neighborhoods that allow for and can accommodate a range of transportation options and minimize reliance on automobiles for all trips. TND also emphasizes the reduction of building setbacks for maximum land use efficiency and to encourage creation of a safe pedestrian environment, as well as the preservation of natural areas and rural character by concentrating development in defined areas.

There are many possible ways in which the South Hill UDA could be developed over time, and the exact nature of any development within the UDA will ultimately be determined by land owners or developers of the properties. However, the concept in Figure 2 provides just one example of how a UDA in South Hill might be implemented.

This proposed South Hill UDA concept can accommodate population growth beyond the 20-year timeframe, as needed.

C. Summary of Zoning Objectives

§ 15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia requires several key concepts be applied. The first is that development be mixed use, include mixed housing types, and be pedestrian-friendly. These ideas are implemented principally through comprehensive planning, which is then realized through zoning and subdivision regulations. These UDA principles are implemented through the preparation and adoption of a Comprehensive Plan amendment. New zoning text will be prepared, consistent with the plan and state density requirements, and adopted—and then made available to developers in designated urban development areas. However, it is not required that South Hill place the new zoning designations on its official zoning map. That action can be taken later, upon specific request by a land-owner or developer who wishes to take advantage of the benefits provided under the UDA pattern of development.

However, the Commonwealth of Virginia places one additional requirement on these areas – development must be able to occur “by right.” Initial impressions suggest this term means that base zoning districts, without conditions or proffers, are required. The state has more recently clarified that the intent is to use the existing rezoning process, allowing communities to require and accept proffers from the developer at the time of rezoning. However, once the new zoning is in place on the official zoning map, then development within that area must generally be allowed through approval of site plans administered at the staff level. (Some uses with identifiable impacts will continue to require special permission before they are allowed.) Existing subdivision processes continue to apply in urban development areas.

D. Zoning Recommendation

The land use concept for the South Hill urban development area would be difficult to implement without some changes to the existing zoning regulations. While current zoning includes a townhouse (R2-8) and an apartment district (R2-16, which allows for mixed housing types), the front yard specifications (30 feet required) are suburban in nature and too large for UDAs. In order to build a more compact neighborhood, these front setbacks must be reduced within the urban development area to 15 feet. In addition, the smallest lot in a standard single-family district today is 10,000 square feet (in R1-10). This would not quite generate the state’s mandate of four units per acre, and therefore it is recommended that the Town add a new district (R1-6) that allows 6,000 square foot lots. These lots are more appropriate in an urban context, and more compatible with adjacent townhouse or mixed use development as well. Finally, while the C-3, Central Business District allows a variety of uses, it is inappropriate to zone land outside the downtown using this district. Therefore, a very similar district should be added (MX-3) that allows for urban mixed use development.

The specifics of each recommended zoning district are detailed in the UDA Zoning Amendment.

Growth Policy Statement

South Hill intends to continue promoting economic growth in the area, which includes commercial and industrial activity. In order to succeed in those areas, the Town will provide for adequate infrastructure, including water and sewer treatment capacity, adequate water distribution systems, adequate sewer conveyance systems, and well-maintained streets.

South Hill also needs to enforce zoning, subdivision, site plan, building codes, and other controls on developers and builders in order to ensure that the safety and welfare of the general public is protected as our community develops.

Intergovernmental cooperation remains a key part of South Hill's growth policy, as the region comes together to do more infrastructure and economic development projects. In addition, the development of high quality telecommunications is a priority for the Town.

The efforts at redevelopment of the downtown area are recognized as a component of South Hill's growth policy. The growth and redevelopment of economic and cultural activity in the downtown area is a central desire of the community. The prevention of blight and deterioration in the downtown and throughout the community is an urgent focus of the Town. The Town also has, as a part of its growth policy, continued efforts at beautification and appearance improvements especially at the gateways of South Hill.

South Hill's growth policy also includes the need to maintain and improve the quality of family life. This includes support for education, housing, recreation, medical facilities, and all other facets of community life. The Town also supports the development of affordable and medium cost housing. The Town recognizes that the quality of life of the citizens is a key factor in ensuring the future growth of the community.