

August 9, 2005 reflecting approval by the DWSP Board, adoption by the City-County Planning Board on July 14, 2005 and discussion by the City Council Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee on August 9, 2005.

Downtown Plan Update—2005

(revises information but follows same format as the 2002 “brochure” version)

The Overall Downtown Development Vision

Make downtown a DESTINATION by creating a core area of vibrant, intense mixed uses in a very pedestrian-friendly environment. Emphasize major employment centers, restaurants, supportive and festive retail, entertainment, arts, and downtown residential uses.

Create transportation linkages, mixed use, special theme, and neighborhood oriented areas around the core of downtown which support downtown and transition smoothly to surrounding areas.

Progress Requires Planning

We have the plan for an even greater downtown...

We have an inclusive plan. An exciting, ambitious and innovative plan. It’s a plan that expands on Legacy, the New Century Plan, and the recommendations of renowned architect Ralph Lerner, by considering all the adjacent areas that complement the downtown core and defining a realistic process of implementation.

Think of what has happened here...

There have been great accomplishments in Winston-Salem thanks to the visionary efforts of forward thinking business and industry leaders and to city-county government actions. Our city is home to some of the finest educational institutions in the country. One of the leading tobacco companies in the world was developed here, employing thousands. Banking and investments spearheaded by pillars of the financial industry have made Winston-Salem a nationally recognized financial center. An airline was born here and still produces employment for many hundreds of local people. People wear what we make all over the world and they stand in line on the other side of the country to get our hot doughnuts now. Strong community and business support has made our arts and arts education unparalleled for a city our size. We’re proud of these achievements in our past, but are aware of the challenges of the future. In order to be competitive in this multi-cultural, more technological, more connected world, there has to be a PLAN.

We’ve risen to the challenge...

Now is the time to step up efforts that will have a direct, positive and tangible effect on business.

A PLAN that, when implemented, will attract young people, particularly young professionals 21-34 years of age to downtown Winston-Salem to live, work and play.

A PLAN that will attract new businesses and investments through the absorption of more downtown office space as well as the development of dining, entertainment, and retail establishments.

A PLAN that provides a home for the “new economy” by providing space for high tech, research, and biotech uses.

A PLAN that encourages new residential development, establishes better transportation linkages and stimulates other parts of the city and surrounding areas.

A PLAN that celebrates the growing diversity of our community by providing libraries, parks, facilities embracing cultural tourism, and areas for people to meet and share life’s experiences.

A PLAN that clearly defines our total and comprehensive position on economic development and the future of the city.

It is a PLAN conceived and nurtured by business leaders, government leaders, and community-minded citizens with a love for Winston-Salem and a dedication to her future and prosperity. A plan that is owned and supported by everyone.

Major Use Areas

Civic Plaza Area (New!)

The Civic Plaza Area is a new, exciting urban mixed use development encompassing parts of several blocks that will connect the financial district on Second Street to Fourth Street, our downtown’s “living room.” The Civic Plaza itself will be a well-landscaped and sculptured public plaza area where people can meet, relax, exercise and enjoy the amenities of a park area, and where performances ranging from symphony, to dance, to music and arts festivals will be staged. Underneath the Plaza and its associated development will be parking for employees, residents, and visitors. The area surrounding the Plaza will have new development as well as development achieved through adaptive reuse, and will include residential buildings with ground level retail, other commercial or institutional uses, office development and a site for a future new high rise Class A office building. The existing Liberty Plaza building would remain on the Plaza’s south side.

Government District

The Government District Area houses the Courts and offices of the city, county, and federal governments. All located within easy walking distance of one another, customers can find everything they need for conducting government business.

Arts & Entertainment Area

The Arts and Entertainment Area is anchored on the southwest by a Performing Arts District comprised of the Stevens Center, Winston-Square Park, and a new Performing and Visual Arts Center at the Sawtooth Building location. On the northeast it would be anchored by a Visual Arts District including individual artist’s galleries and studios, Piedmont Craftsmen, art and antiques shops, a small performance venue (The Garage) ,

upscale bars and restaurants, and the relocated Sawtooth Center for Visual Arts. Connecting these two anchors is Restaurant Row and other

adjacent blocks with a mixture of dining, entertainment, retail, and residential uses, as well as the Benton Convention Center and two newly renovated hotels. Because major offices and an emerging collection of residential developments are adjacent to this district there are a variety of downtown employees, visitors, arts patrons, and residents to keep the area busy day and night.

Financial District

The Financial District dominates the skyline with financial service companies including Wachovia, BB&T, GMAC Insurance, and Piedmont Federal Savings and Loan calling downtown Winston-Salem home. These companies significantly account for downtown Winston-Salem having the largest concentration of office space in the entire Piedmont Triad region of North Carolina. Together with the Government District, the Financial District brings in thousands of employees and several hundred visitors and customers each day.

Research Park

Immediately to the east of the Government District is the Research Park. This area of health care and high technology research has seen significant construction and employment development. The potential exists through further development and expansion of this district to ultimately employ several thousand people. As the original 12-acre master plan for the Park is built out, expansion will cover an eventual 185 acres to the east on both sides of Business I-40, eventually linking with the westward expansion of Winston-Salem State University and creating what may become the largest downtown research park in America.

Mixed Use (New!)

There are several Mixed Use Areas to the east, to the northeast in the Goler Heights area, and to the southwest and west of the downtown core where existing buildings could be adaptively reused and developed for smaller scale shops, offices, grocery stores or markets and/or residential uses. Vacant lots or surface parking lots could be developed for those same types of uses as well. The potential West End Village development at Fourth and Broad, with potential commercial and residential use, will help in the creation of downtown's next master planned mixed use area.

Sports Venue—Baseball Stadium (New!)

In an area between Business-40, Peters Creek Parkway, and Green Street, space could potentially be assembled for a new downtown minor league baseball stadium with related office and mixed use development. This location affords excellent vehicular accessibility and is in walking distance of future mixed use and other entertainment venues along Burke Street. Trolley shuttle service and possible future street car access, to and from the existing parking facilities near the Arts and Entertainment Area, can provide access to yet additional pre- and post-game dining and entertainment option.

Holly Avenue, West End & Goler Heights Neighborhoods

The PLAN proposes continued revitalization of the Holly Avenue, West End and Goler Heights Areas. Promoting these three areas on the southwest, northwest and northeast edges of the downtown core will provide an excellent choice of neighborhoods within easy walking distance on three sides.

Housing Elements

Increasing the presence and supply of housing in and around downtown is an absolute must if we want to create the great downtown that this city needs. Already there have been a number of successful multifamily developments completed or in progress in and near the downtown core. The PLAN proposes that upper level conversions of building space for housing be a focus of activity in the core area. Also, housing should be a prominent feature in the mixed use areas nearby, both as conversions of existing buildings as well as new development. Continued revitalization of the Holly Avenue and Goler Heights neighborhoods along with continued preservation of the West End neighborhood and West End Village will provide a more neighborhood-oriented housing environment adjacent to the downtown core.

And finally, maintenance and, where appropriate, the upgrading of neighborhood areas adjacent to the downtown on all sides should be a continuing priority so that an attractive and diverse housing supply is available virtually right next door for more and more of our downtown employment base.

Transportation Elements

Transportation linkages and changes in ways to get around are absolutely necessary if we wish to create a great downtown. These will include:

- Change the ramp configuration on Business I-40 to make it easier and safer to access downtown and its public parking areas. This ramp reconfiguration should include care in the design of any elevated ramp structures in order to provide for attractive pedestrian and vehicular access underneath.
- Upgrade US 52 and Future I-74 with better ramps for the downtown area.
- Improve Broad Street to form a western gateway to the downtown area.
- Further extend Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive all the way to Broad Street/Reynolda Road or Northwest Boulevard to form a northern gateway to the downtown area.

All these improvements will then form an arterial or expressway ring around the edges of the downtown area, providing improved traffic flow for through traffic, and more options

for motorists entering downtown. Several landscaped roundabouts are proposed at key intersections to better define entryway points to the downtown area.

Our Strollway, linking Old Salem and Fourth Street, should be extended further north along Trade St. to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive so that the Arts District is also connected.

The regional rail system currently being studied could provide a convenient and fast alternative to the Piedmont Triad International Airport and to Greensboro, with downtown Winston-Salem as a logical local hub. The addition of a light rail, street car, or trolley system could link the Wake Forest/Coliseum area to the School of the Arts, Winston-Salem State University and East Winston to the Baptist Hospital/Medical Center area with downtown being the center of that system.

Finally, the PLAN suggests the addition of a north-south connector between Salem Avenue and Patterson Avenue to link the college and research park area to the Goler Renaissance Redevelopment Area on the northeast

How we have already gotten started, what's been done, and what's left to do?

The Downtown Plan adopted in March of 2002, set forth a number of initiatives that were to be advanced immediately in order to set the pace for future plan implementation. Key items among those have already been accomplished, including:

- Funding for the new Downtown Partnership has been provided by the Millenium Fund.
- Site control has been obtained by the City of Winston-Salem for a majority of the Civic Plaza area.
- The conversion of the Nissen Building to 145 residential units is accomplished.

The 2002 Plan also called for a number of things to be done by 2004, as follows.

PROJECT	STATUS
4 th Street Streetscape Improvements	Done!
Additional Restaurants and Entertainment	Done, with more on the way!
Nissen Building Residential	Done!
Civic Plaza Design Study	Done!
Completion of One West Fourth	Done!
Nomination of One or More Historic Districts	Done!
Conduct Cultural Arts Festival in 2002	Done!
Conduct Film Festival in 2003	Done! Now an annual event!
Continue Downtown Outdoor Events	Done!
Research Park Expansion Plans	Done!
Open Stevens Center to Film Showing	Done!
Completion of County Administration Building	Done!
Children's Museum	Done!
Design of Rubber-Tire Trolley System	Done!
Planning for a Longer Term Rail Trolley System	Underway

PROJECT	STATUS
Beginning of Public Art Program	Underway
Design and Installation of Trailblazer Signs	Underway
Emphasis on More Downtown Housing	Underway
Development of Downtown Movie Theater	Planning Underway
Plan for Extension of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to Reynolda Road or Broad Street	Underway
Develop Short and Long Term Strategies for City Owned Property on 4 th Street	Underway

With all the excitement created by this impressive list of short term accomplishments, several new projects have been started that will propel downtown into an even greater level of vibrancy. Those new projects include:

- Research Park Expansion, including the new Biotechnology Research Facility #1, and the master planning and acquisition of an additional 185 acres.
- Purchase, renovation and conversion of the Adams Mark Hotels into a Marriott Hotel and Embassy Suites by the Noble Investment Group
- Sale and redevelopment of a new home for the Sawtooth Center for Visual Arts.
- A new, performing and visual arts center in a renovated Sawtooth Building.
- Study and recommendation for adaptive reuse of the Old County Courthouse.
- Seeking of developer interest that would lead to a major mixed use development project including the Civic Plaza site and the Old County Courthouse.

Other short term projects to be completed include:

- Extension of the Strollway from Fourth Street through the Arts District along Trade Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
- Completion of a full feasibility study for a central city streetcar system
- Downtown Design Guidelines (could include guidelines for mixed use development)
- Development of a new downtown minor league baseball stadium
- Continued development and planning for the Arts District, especially expansion east to Liberty Street
- More detailed planning for downtown greenspace
- Improve availability/marketing of convenient short-term parking, including structured parking in the Civic Plaza mixed use development
- Beginning of construction of the Civic Plaza
- Courthouse Square adaptive reuse
- Completion of Aquatics Center at the Southeast Gateway mixed use development
- Study ramp configuration and design elements of I-40 Business improvements
- Study and make recommendations concerning ramp system for U.S. 52

Within the next five years, a second group of projects is critical in order to maintain the direction and momentum that this plan has started. These projects will also require public-private partnerships in varying degrees to implement, and more detailed planning

is needed to better define the costs and the roles of the parties who would implement them.

- Continued development of the Research Park, including “daylighting” Bath Branch as a waterway feature of the Park (*Daylighting added by CD/H/GG Committee*)
- Development of Goler Heights area
- Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. extension to Reynolda Road or Northwest Boulevard, and Broad St. improvements
- Design and construction of gateways and entryways into downtown
- Mixed Use Area development, including a grocery store or market
- Continue to host National Black Theater Festival and River Run Film Festival
- Begin development of first phase streetcar system
- Complete two-way conversion of Fourth and Fifth Streets eastward to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive (*added by CD/H/GG Committee*)

A third group of projects may take up to ten years to complete but is also important to the achievement of the Plan's objectives and should be started as soon as possible. These projects would also require additional detailed planning to define costs, financing, and the roles of the principal parties.

- Develop commuter rail and complete streetcar system
- Relocation of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools system Educational Center to downtown, including a School Administration Center and Career Center
- Construction of recommended Business I-40 and US 52/I-74 improvements
- Creation of additional gateways and public art
- Creation of additional sports and recreation facilities
- Additional street circulation changes
- Additional long-term parking needs
- Additional office space absorption

It is plain to see that when plans get prepared, people in Winston-Salem respond. The amount of progress made since the 2002 Plan has been remarkable. Projects now underway, and those to come, will literally change the face of downtown Winston-Salem, creating one of the most dynamic urban centers of any city our size in America!

Join us, so you too can say, “I’m Downtown!”