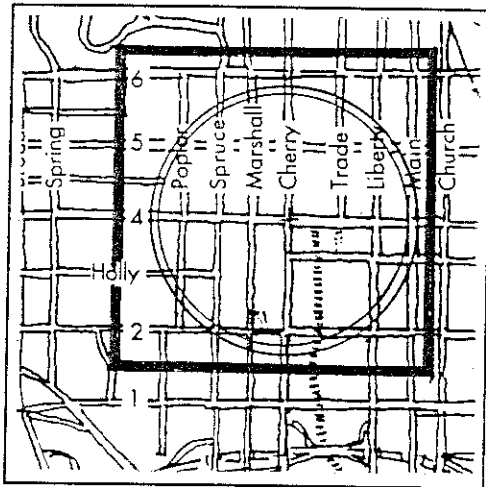


Planning for Downtown Winston-Salem

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Prepared for
The City of Winston-Salem

Brown and Keener Urban Design
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Introduction

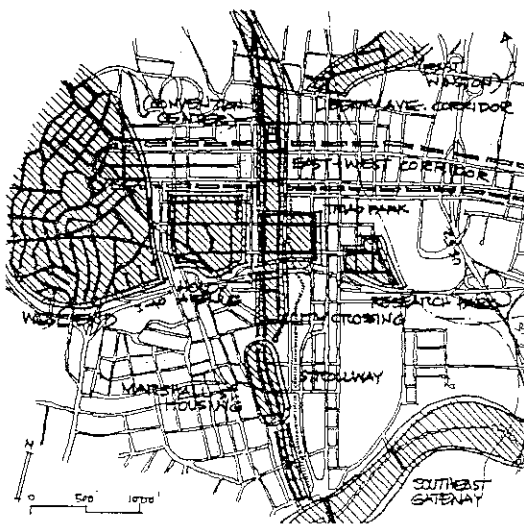
What is the Question?

In the last decade Winston-Salem has begun and completed great steps that have transformed its downtown, steps that came on the heels of a significant economic downturn caused by office and industrial closings and acquisitions. This new downtown has seen the creation of new facilities for the arts, in the Stevens Center and the Sawtooth Center, a growing tourist and convention industry, which has included planned expansion of the convention center and the opening of a second large convention hotel, and the construction of several new major office buildings. Restaurants and night-life entertainment have grown, and the West End residential area has flourished.

In spite of these accomplishments, however, the city is still left with the sense that downtown is still not quite right, that efforts are on the right track, but that there is something lacking. As a result, the questions have been asked: "What should be done next? How can we plan for the future of the heart of our city?" This report provides a brief analysis of the successes and problems of downtown, and a set of recommendations for action now.

Previous Plans:

Many planning reports have been prepared in recent years for the overall downtown area; many aggressive actions have resulted from them. Some were for neighborhoods and commercial areas at the periphery of downtown, some were for the County and included recommendations for the total downtown area, some took an overview of the area, and many were for specific sub-areas within downtown. The earliest plan, the 1983 Central Area Action Plan (the "Crane Plan") covered the entire downtown, made many specific recommendations, and has on the whole been fully implemented — with the notable exception of the recommendation that "the traditional...down-



Locations of the previous plans in and around Downtown

town will be reinforced with upgraded shopping and restaurant tenants". The 1993 Downtown Strategic Plan is the most recent guide for downtown development and planning, but its major recommendations do not focus on the traditional core area of 3rd, 4th, and 5th Streets. The only recent planning effort that did focus on the traditional core was the 1993 East-West Corridor Plan, but it was never approved and acted upon, and included recommendations for general direction rather than for specific actions. As a result, there is a void in planning for the heart of downtown, the "Core" that has been the traditional center of the whole city.

People's Views:

When many individuals and groups were asked for their observations and recommendations for downtown, their views were not based on the parameters of the planning studies. They were instead based on the individual's personal and current experiences in the life of that area. These observations covered both general and specific recommendations, and included expressions of satisfaction as well as concern; they can be summarized as focusing on these larger issues:

"We'd like a place where people want to walk, even when they don't have anything specific to do."

— James Yarbrough, Planning Director,
City-County Planning Board

As described above, downtown has many great activities, areas, and buildings but it is not a great "place". There are too many unsightly buildings and areas between the fine historic buildings, the cultural and entertainment events, the large new office buildings, and the tourist and convention activities. All of these accomplishments do not yet add up to a single place that is a source of pride for the whole city.

The shopping of downtown does not serve the entire community, and so it is not well used; one result is that the main 4th Street shopping area usually appears rather empty, and therefore somewhat threatening.

Traffic moves very smoothly in downtown, which is both good and bad: downtown is the most accessible area of the city, but it is not pedestrian-friendly — a characteristic which is needed to have a great city place.

The fact that the buses and the Transportation Terminal are moving from 4th Street to 5th Street will change both traffic and shopping patterns, since the much of the existing shopping near the existing terminal area has evolved to serve the short-term shopping needs of the bus patrons. The result of this relocation will be new opportunities for retail that serves a wider market, and for re-thought traffic patterns.

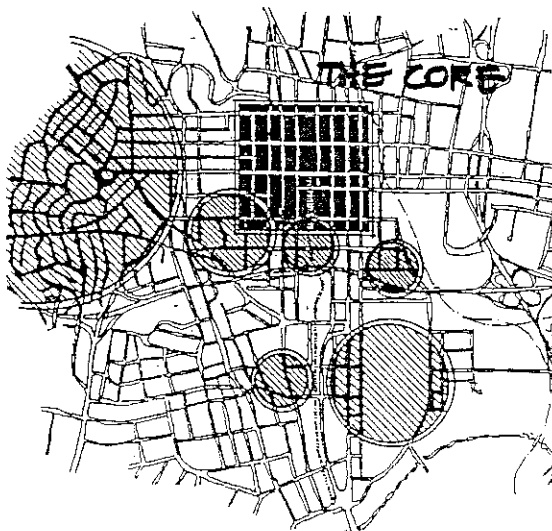
Very few people live within the Core, a fact that further adds to the sense of inactivity and emptiness.

The most over-riding observation, the one that may have been the basis for most of the criticism, is that there is a "void" at the Core. Many new and successful accomplishments have occurred in the areas surrounding the traditional center of 3rd, 4th, and 5th Streets, but that center is not holding them all together. It is most interesting to note that this perception parallels the focus of previous plans on projects at the edge of the center.

Recommendations:

The primary conclusion that has been reached as a result of these analyses is that the next planning (and development) steps must focus on creating a new life for the Core. As a result, four basic planning efforts must be undertaken, and appropriate and experienced consultants should be engaged to assist in their accomplishment:

The most important guiding step must be to create a Business Development Plan, which will identify possible retail markets for the Core, identify other development markets (offices, restaurants, hotels, etc.), will evaluate the impacts of convention and tourism on new retail and development in the area, will recommend short and long term development and improvement options, and will propose methods for implementing the recommendations. This business planning step is essential; without a grounding in the real markets, all the other planning efforts cannot have the impacts that are wished for. The traffic and parking patterns

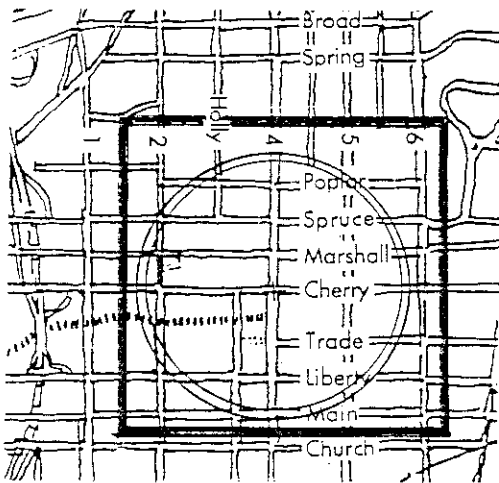


The Core, at the center of the existing nodes of activity

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must be re-evaluated in a new Traffic Plan, to find ways to maintain sufficiently smooth vehicular flow, but to also create a place that is comfortable, safe, and exciting in which to be a pedestrian.

An overall Urban Design Plan must accompany the Business Development and Traffic Plans. This plan must identify potential new development sites within the compact Core, must identify those buildings which could be preserved, must include a landscape plan that creates comfortable walking routes from the new (and old) developments at the edge of the Core to the 4th Street center, must consider priorities and phasing, and must establish design standards for all new developments and improvements so that every new effort aspires to the same level of excellence.



The walking distances in a compact Core

A successful downtown that integrates shopping, offices, tourism, culture, entertainment, and residential life into a compact Core requires on-going and aggressive management. Therefore the final recommendation is to create a Business Improvement District, a special management and taxing organization that has been used with extraordinary success in downtowns of all sizes across the country. This organization can help the city keep sidewalks clean and safe, can give the necessary guidance to new design improvements, can organize the retailers for common marketing efforts, and can — in general — oversee the entire quality of downtown life.

The Optimism to Move Forward:

Winston-Salem has repeatedly shown the energy to imagine its future and to accomplish all that it sets out to do. The Core of downtown, which is indeed the heart of the whole city, must be the next focus of that energy. This next step in the on-going process of making and keeping a city great will bring all the previous accomplishments together, will fill the void, and will create a place that is a source of pride for everyone in the city.

People's Views and Previous Plans

Previous Plans:

A great deal of planning has taken place in the past several years which focuses on all or part of the area that is generally identified as "downtown" Winston-Salem. As can be seen in the summaries of discussions with various citizens and organizations, the exact boundary of "downtown" varies depending on the purpose of the plan. For the purposes of this report, therefore, thirteen individual planning documents have been reviewed, some recent and some more than ten years old, some approved and acted upon, and some merely remain as studies and proposals.

Two focus on the *entire county*, with some references to downtown planning:

"As cities develop a more regional market for services, office development becomes a stronger statement for the Central Business District. The location of office-related employment centers also has an impact on shopping habits."

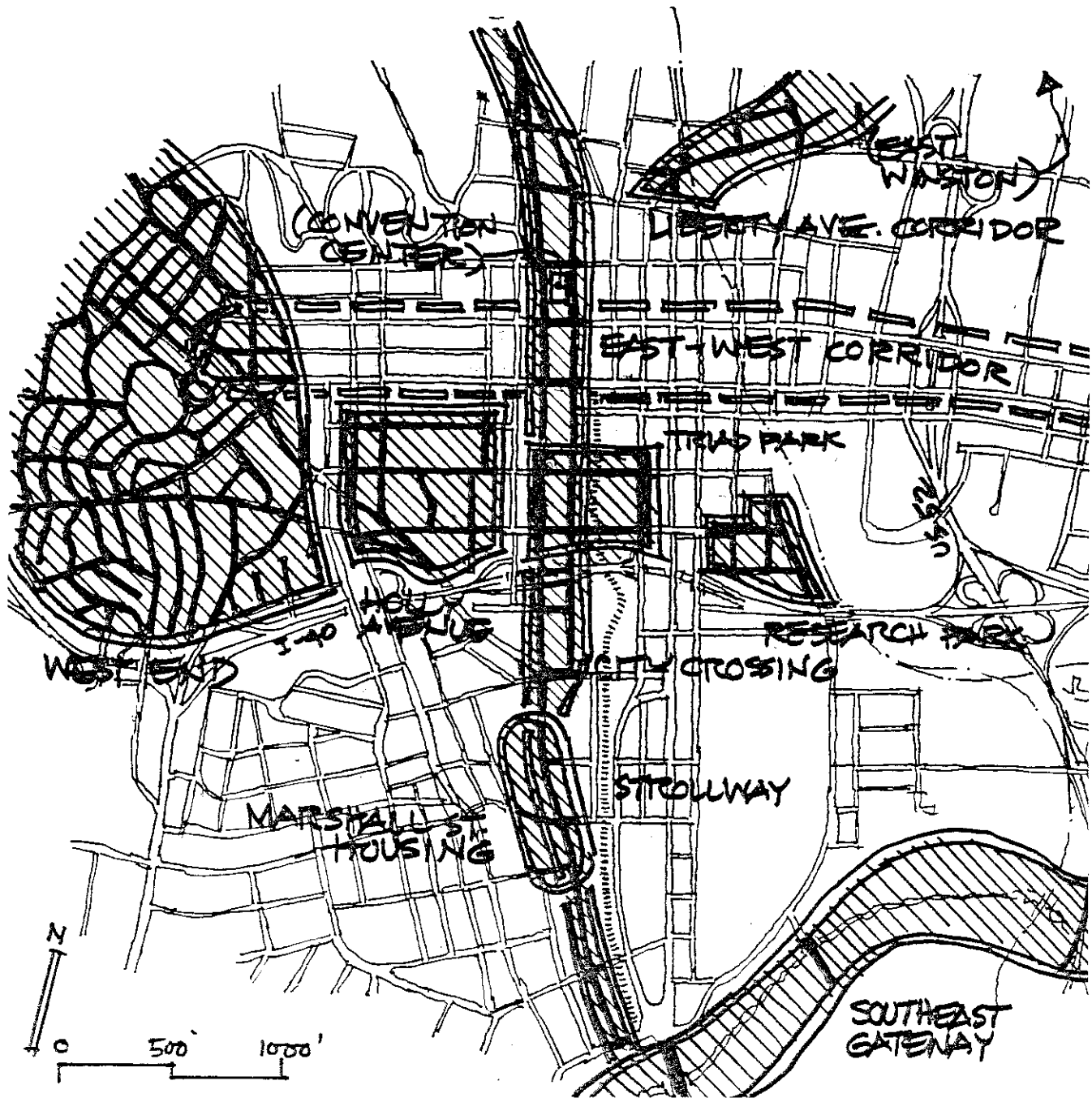
— 1998 Vision 2005

Vision 2005 (1988), by the Planning Board, is a 161 page report that is a growth management plan for the County. It therefore includes recommendations regarding utilities, the environment, roadways and traffic, the economy, housing, office and industrial development, open space, community facilities, historic preservation, and urban design. Some recommendations apply specifically to downtown: in addition to the larger growth recommendation of a Central Business District, or CBD, (for employment, offices, hotels, tourism, and culture), the categories of housing, office development, historic preservation, and urban design also have specific downtown-related proposals.

Legacy (1995–96), by the Planning Board, is still in progress, with a "visioning" process completed in 1995. It is intended to build on the work of Vision 2005, and therefore to become a new comprehensive plan for the County.

Two focused on *areas immediately adjacent to downtown*, and were generally judged to be not within the normal downtown study area:

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Locations of previous planning areas in Downtown

East Winston Area Plan (1988), by the Planning Board, is for the large area between US-52 and Brushy Fork Creek, north of Business 40, and south of the Smith Reynolds Airport. The area consists primarily of residential uses, but is also seen as an opportunity for certain types of commercial and industrial developments. It apparently is an area in need of development and improvement, with a large number of abandoned buildings and closed businesses. This Area Plan became part of the County's Comprehensive Plan, to act as a guide for future Planning Board actions.

Liberty Street Corridor Study (1995), by the Planning Board recommends improvements to the area of Liberty Street that borders the East Winston neighborhoods. As an area of many closed businesses (highway retail, manufacturing, and industry), it could far better serve its neighborhood and the city if new developments and landscaped public improvements were to take place.

Seven focused on *specific sub-areas* of the larger downtown:



House in the Holly Avenue Neighborhood

Holly Avenue Neighborhood Design Study (1992), by the Planning Board makes recommendations for the land use organization and the design character of the buildings and streets, for the neighborhood which is closest to the Central Business District area. There is considerable neighborhood interest in improving the area, which suffers from incompatible uses, heavy through traffic, and some neglect. It has great potential for convenient and neighborly in-town living, with its handsome homes and tree-lined streets.

The Southeast Gateway Plan (1992), by the Urban Design Assistance Team of the American Institute of Architects, is a set of landscape and open space design recommendations for the area along the Salem Creek, just south of Old Salem. It also makes some recommendations for new roadways and new developments adjacent to what would be a new city park. It is, essentially, the southern border of the larger downtown, and would connect Winston-Salem State University, Salem Academy College, Old Salem, The North Carolina School of the Arts, the Strollway, and the new Marshall Street residential developments.

City Corridor, now “Community Crossing” (1994), by Edward D. Stone, Jr. & Associates for the Community Appearance Commission is a landscape design study which extends through and beyond the limits of downtown. Like the Southeast Gateway, it will connect many important areas and institutions of the city: SciWorks, Wake Forest University, Reynolds, the Stadium, and Coliseum, the Convention Center, the center of downtown, the Sawtooth Center, the Marshall St. developments, and the School of the Arts. It is a landscaped road system that parallels the Strollway pedestrian system in and near downtown.

Downtown Lighting Standards (1993), by the Downtown Development Corporation was completed as a draft only, and has not yet been approved. It makes recommendations for the design for the light fixtures, poles, levels of illumination, and spacing of street and parking lot lighting in the CBD. It also includes recommendations for parking deck and pedestrian-use open space lighting. Its primary purpose was to enhance and improve public safety at night; its other main purpose was to establish a more uniform design appearance in the downtown than now exists, where each development selects and installs its own lights, and where the lighting on one street can vary from the next.

“The East-West corridor should be a linear corridor, with focal points/enhancements.”

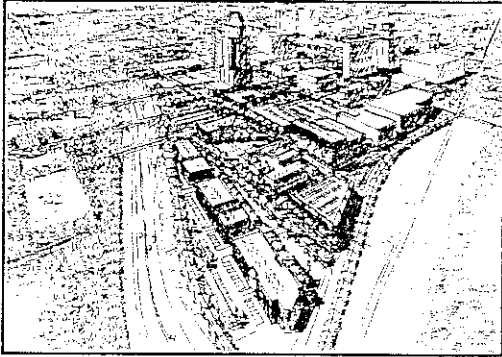
“Courthouse Square should be a major focal point of the Downtown area ... as the principal ‘Town Square’.”

— 1993 East-West Crosstown Corridor

East-West Crosstown Corridor (1993), by the Downtown Development Corporation was completed as a draft only, and has not been approved. Other than the zoning code, this is the only study that specifically focuses on the core of the downtown, in that it calls for Fourth Street to regain its place as Winston-Salem’s “Main Street”. It makes specific recommendations for traffic, streetscapes, zoning, land uses, preservation, and development opportunities.

West End Historic District Design Review Guidelines (1994), by the Historic District Commission establish criteria for new construction, new additions, and renovations of the houses in the area. It covers materials, ornament, windows, roof shapes, railings, and maintenance in great detail. It also gives direction to the conversion of existing houses to commercial uses, regarding signs, awnings, etc., and to the appropriate locations of new structures.

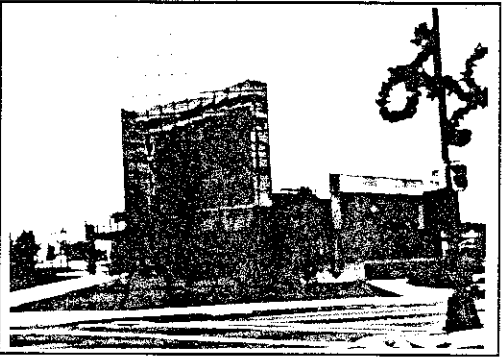
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Aerial view of the Research Park

Piedmont Triad Research Park Master Plan (1995) gives recommendations for the design and site planning of a new research park located at the southeast corner of downtown. The park will include the reuse of some of the existing RJR buildings, including a former laboratory that is now occupied by a department of the Bowman Gray Medical Center. Design covenants for new buildings have been created, and a preliminary design for traffic flow and a campus-like landscape are included. Land acquisition is completed, the rebuilding of 1st Street as an entrance boulevard is also completed, and studies for the renovation of one of the RJR factories and the first new building are under way.

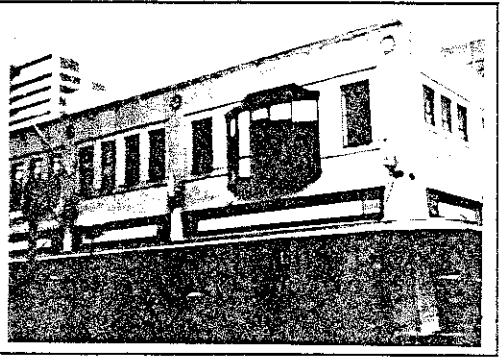
Four cover the *entire area considered as "downtown"* by this report:



View of the BB&T Building

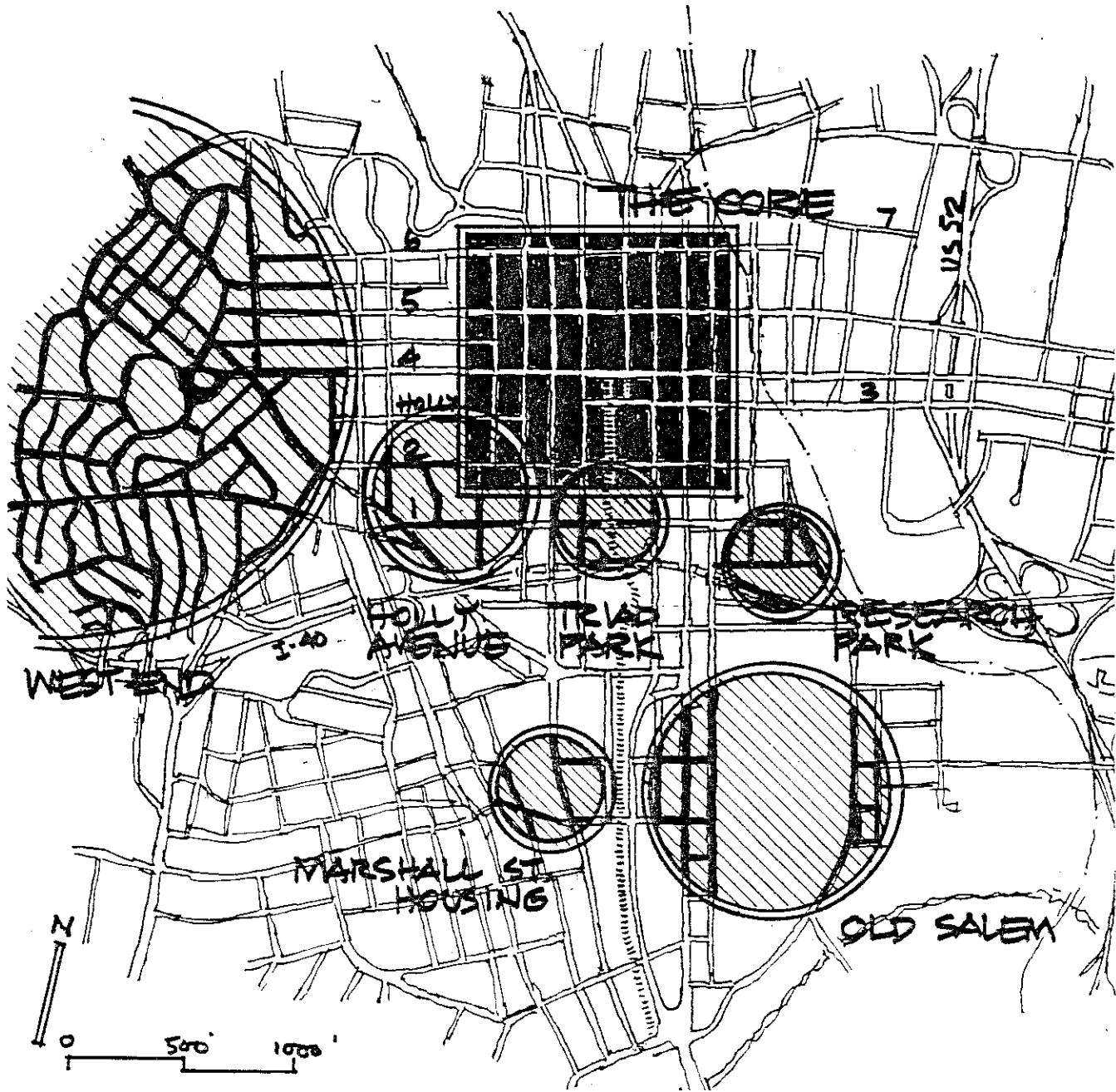
Central Area Action Plan (the "Crane Plan" – 1983), by CBT/Crane Associates for the Planning Board has been the basis for most of the developments that have taken place in the downtown area in the last fifteen years. It recommended such accomplishments as the "Gateway Plaza", which is now the location of the Southern National and Wachovia buildings, the Marshall Street residential developments, the Strollway, the Convention Center expansion, the Stevens Center, and so on. As such, it apparently has been a considerable success since it is essentially built and, therefore, there is no comparable implementation plan at this time.

Downtown Preservation Plan (1988), by the City of Winston-Salem, is a statement of principles regarding historic preservation in the area, but does not include specific action recommendations. It calls for identifying buildings for historic designation, and for identifying entire historic districts, as part of a larger economic strategy that includes tourism, the rehabilitation of older buildings to add to the tax rolls, the public use of tax incentives, the creation of historic easements, and so on.



The Waltham Building on Fourth Street

Downtown Winston-Salem Strategic Plan, 1993–1998 (1993), by the Downtown Development Corporation is the most recent overview for planning and development for downtown. It establishes five areas of focus: (1) the on-going



The Core and its surrounding activity nodes

"A critical mass of quality corporations, professional agencies, and community organizations ... provide a significant daytime employee population."

— 1993 Downtown Strategic Plan

efforts to grow the economy through new office development, tourism, conventions, and building reuse; (2) establishing downtown as the cultural center for the region; (3) the creation of a clear image that is based on improved streetscapes, a well-organized parking system, residential developments, road improvements, and improved perceptions of safety; (4) the making of downtown as the hub of government and public service organizations; (5) achieving a cooperation and synergy between the DDC and other development organizations. Some recommendations in this format are broad in scope, while others are quite detailed; for instance, it includes a diagrammatic plan that identifies the various districts in the downtown, and has a Program of Work that lists several specific implementation projects that includes the filling of the old Wachovia building, the completion of the Research Park, and the implementation of the Holly Avenue Neighborhood Plan. Many of this plan's projects are now completed or under way, and the DDC is continuing to work on the remaining recommendations.

Unified Development Ordinance (or, the zoning code) includes criteria for the CB (Central Business) District that cover dimensional and land use requirements. There are no dimensional limitations on buildings in this area, and so setbacks from the street are permitted but not required, there are no height or bulk limitations, no lot size criteria, etc.: it is therefore extremely flexible. Many land use types are also permitted, ranging from offices, hotels, and various retail types to group homes and landfill. Again, there is great flexibility permitted.

People's Views:

A series of interviews and meetings were held, in which people were asked for their opinions, analyses, and recommendations for downtown. The individuals ranged from downtown merchants and residents to those in the broader governmental and policy-making positions; they included:

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"Why not consider Downtown as Uptown? This gives a much more positive view of the center of our city."

— DDC Board Member

The Chamber of Commerce
The Steering Committee for this study
Small business owners and a resident of the downtown core
The City Manager and the Assistant City Manager whose responsibility included the convention center
Commercial real estate brokers
The manager of the Adam's Mark Hotel
Representative of R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.
A Planning Department Planner, regarding the Liberty Street Plan
The Downtown Development Corporation
The Central Winston-Salem Association

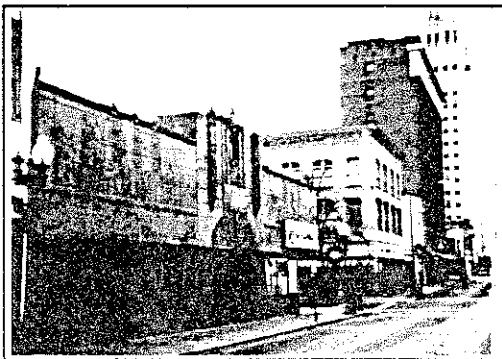
Their views varied with their relative interests and perspectives, but there was considerable unanimity of opinion that downtown needed further improvement, and that the most important improvements focused on the shopping area. Their observations and recommendations can be summarized as follows:

When asked what the *geographic boundaries* of downtown were, some suggested the wider area that included Old Salem and the new Marshall Street housing south of I-40, the Public Safety Center north of 7th Street, and the West End. Others focused more on the central shopping/cultural/convention area. Still others pointed out that the boundary can vary with the time and the activity (note the differences between working, living, and attending cultural events).

When asked what the major *problems* were (for if there were no problems, this planning effort would be unnecessary), these appeared to be the major observations:

Downtown, on the whole, is visually unattractive; too much of it is unpleasant looking (e.g., blank walls along the sidewalk, poorly cared-for and designed shop fronts, derelict older buildings, open parking lots in the wrong places, etc.: "Until we clean up the mess, we won't get people to come").

The hills which now stand between the new developments (e.g., Wachovia) and the core area of 4th Street are a barrier to pedestrian movement; many people in the new office

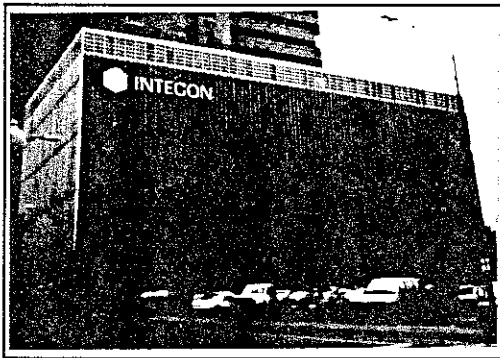


Blank wall on Fourth Street in the Core area

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The Cherry/Marshall Street parking deck



Parking deck and lot facing Fourth Street

buildings either stay within their buildings, or walk down the hill to Old Salem or to other locations away from that traditional core.

The good things (e.g., Stevens Center, Strollway, Hotels, Wachovia Building, certain shops and restaurants) are all isolated from each other, and are separated by the unpleasant looking features mentioned above. Someone likened downtown to a “big blanket with moth holes in it”. As a result, it was observed that “downtown is an area of good things, but is not a good place”.

This separation of the positive features also creates unsteady divisions (as well as uncomfortable connections) between economic classes, which fails to meet the aspiration of downtown as a common ground, where people of the whole city come together.

In general the area is not a pedestrian-friendly place, and has too little of the wonderful fine grain of street level activity that makes downtown attractive, comfortable, and vital. This is especially true in the government building area, and in those empty places between the good features throughout downtown.

There is very limited shopping in all of downtown; there are limited opportunities for dining in the main 4th Street (etc.) shopping area; many larger office buildings have their own (subsidized) company cafeterias, which further discourages employee shopping and dining.

More specifically, there is little or nothing for convention visitors to do that is walkable from the hotels: no restaurants, little shopping, little night-time entertainment. The Cross-Stitch Convention was cited as an example, which consisted primarily of women who found no shopping of interest and no place to eat outside the hotels. This could be a great deterrent to selling Winston-Salem as a convention location.

The fact that there are so few residents in the core area, and that the Holly Avenue neighborhood still needs improvement, contributes to the lack of apparent activity in downtown.

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With the corporate down-sizing of RJR, and the relocation of many Wachovia employees away from the 4th and Main Street intersection, major employee concentrations are shifting away from the traditional core to the Triad Park Area. This has further reduced the activity (and therefore the actual number of potential diners and shopper) in the core area.

The fact that traffic flows so easily in downtown is both a problem and an opportunity: it can discourage pedestrian flow and permits traffic to get by the shops and businesses so quickly that the drivers don't see what is available; on the other hand, it makes downtown the most accessible location in the region.

Safety remains a perceived problem (even though the perception is incorrect); some of this is due to the general lack of pedestrian activity on the sidewalks, which gives a sense of emptiness to many areas.

When asked to identify the opportunities and the positive attributes to downtown, these were the observations; note that they are all seen within the framework of the fact that they generally remain separate from each other:

The new larger office buildings have brought considerable economic development to downtown; the Research Park promises to do the same.

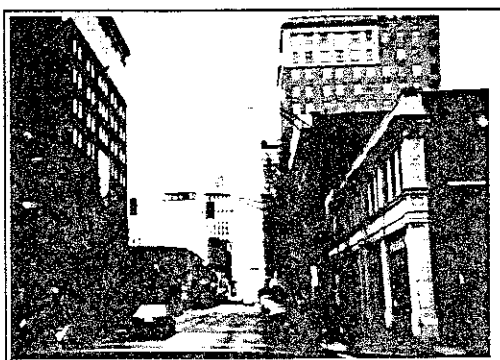
The proposal to expand the convention center and its adjoining hotels is a positive move toward economic growth and to potential increases in pedestrian life. The presence of visitors who come for conventions, as well as for the cultural and historic offerings of downtown, may be the single biggest economic growth opportunity that the area can take advantage of at this time.

The Stevens Center, the Sawtooth Center, and the fledgling arts district on 6th Street are all cultural attractions for the region, even though they are quite separate and distinct from each other.

There are about fifteen restaurants and a few entertainment facilities on 4th Street itself, even though the street is not now known for these activities.



The Strollway and the Hine/Bagby Building at Fourth Street: the good and the bad together



View looking east on Fourth Street in the Core area (with restaurants in the foreground)

The fact that the buses are moving off of 4th Street should relieve some of the unpleasant bus movements from the area, and should create new retail opportunities as the shops which serve the transit users shift toward the new Transit Center location on 5th Street.

Downtown (as mentioned under “problems”, above) is the most accessible location in the region, with many highways and roads leading to it, and with smooth traffic flow within and through it.

Downtown rents are (astonishingly) lower than those in the suburbs, especially for ground level retail space. The real estate representatives were especially interested in this fact as an opportunity to create new downtown businesses.

The West End is a great place to live, with handsome homes and parks and conveniently located good schools; it is also a comfortable walk to the core area. It could be a model for the future of the Holly Avenue. area, as well as be an immediate market for the businesses in the core and surrounding areas.

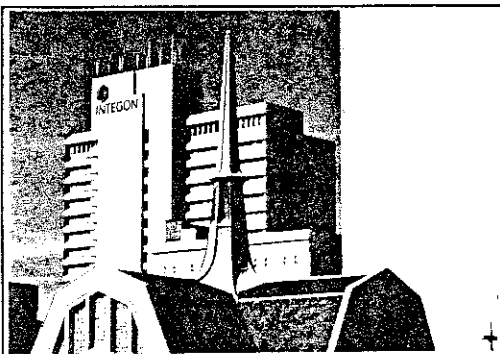
Downtown churches continue to thrive, which brings people from all over the city and therefore continually re-introduces them to the core and its surrounding areas.

The presence of Old Salem is extremely positive, as an attractive place for use by downtown workers and residents, and as an attraction for tourists to the larger downtown.

The street grid pattern has the feeling of a true urban place, and has the flexibility to accommodate both pedestrians and cars and to accept both new buildings and the preservation of the old.

There are many handsome older buildings throughout downtown (in addition to Old Salem and the West End), which give (or could give) a very attractive and humane feeling to the area; many people could see the potential “charm” in downtown because of them.

It is, in fact, a very safe place, and remains quite clean. The bike and foot police patrol is a very positive feature.



Churches, tourism, and businesses coexist to give a strong foundation for future growth.

The city government is quite helpful to businesses and merchants, in general. There is a positive, “can-do” attitude that should bode well for the future.

With the major move of large employers to the area south of 3rd and 2nd Streets, some areas of 3rd Street may be new opportunities for restaurants and support retail growth that is close to the historic shopping area of 4th Street, as well as convenient for those the new employees.

Observations About this Analysis:

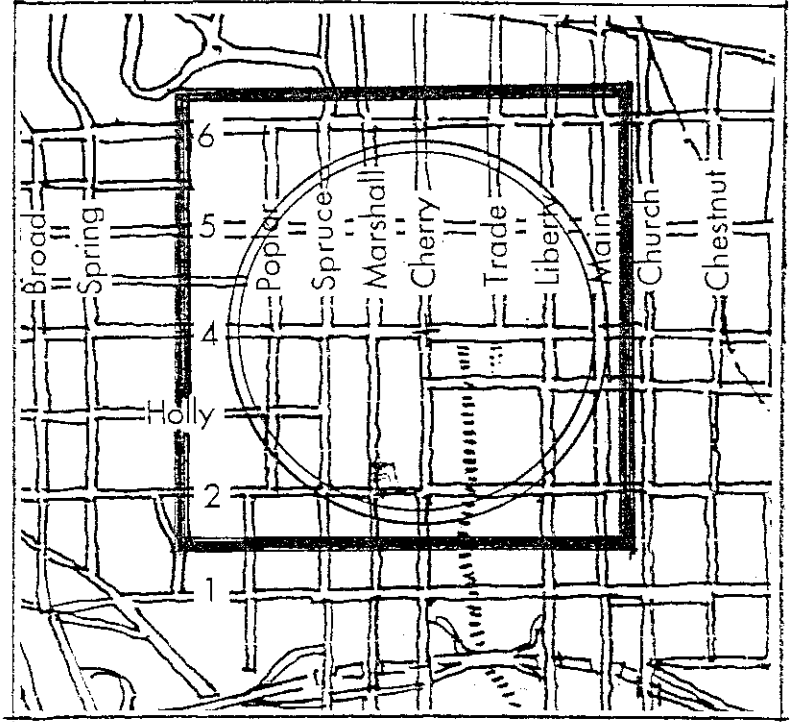
There are eight general and comprehensive conclusions that can be reached from this survey, which are the basis of the recommendations for future planning and development efforts that are described in the chapter entitled *Conclusions and Recommendations*:

While there are many positive aspects about the nature of downtown, they are not connected into one place. There is no focus anymore at the core, which could connect them all, and the walking routes between the various districts and the core is either too long, too difficult, or merely boring and unpleasant. The separate nodes that have occurred do not work together, and do not bring people together. Therefore the center must be the focus of the next planning and development efforts, and the sidewalks and open spaces that lead to it must be made attractive and comfortable.

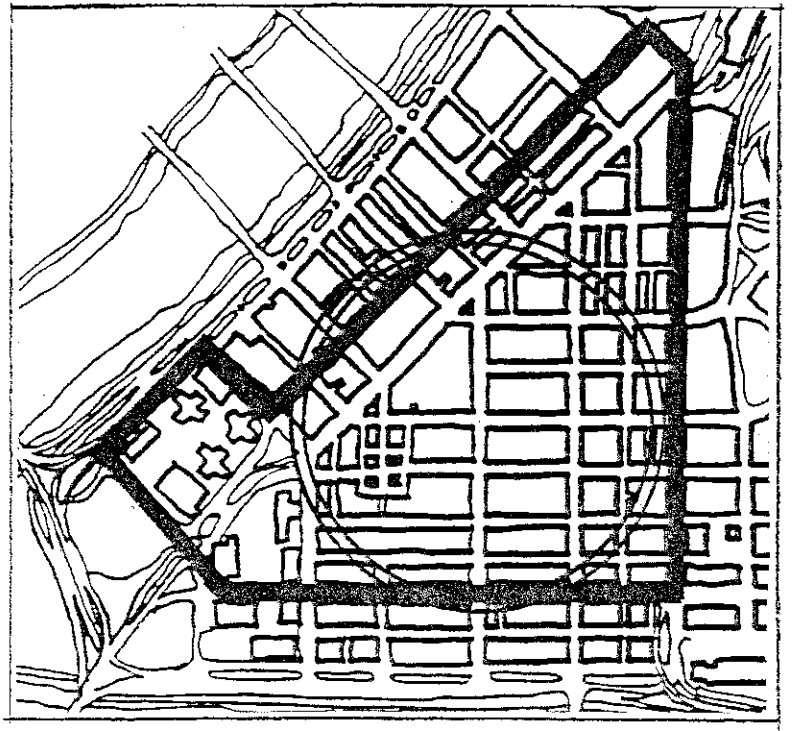
The many previous plans (with the exception of the DDC City Corridor study, which was never approved or acted upon) are either for a wider area than just the core of downtown, or are very specific plans for areas around the core. There is no on-going plan of action at this time that specifically focuses on that center.

The relocation of the bus station presents a positive new opportunity for revitalization, because many of the businesses that are currently nearby the existing terminal area have developed over the years to serve the constituency of the public transit system. When the buses move, it can be expected

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Plan of the Walkable Core in Downtown Winston-Salem



The Walkable Core in Downtown Pittsburgh (at the same scale)

that ultimately those stores will change and new retailing possibilities will develop in the locations near the former terminal. This has been the experience in other cities, in spite of what appears to be only a small distance between the old and new locations. Changing and waiting for buses allows little time for shopping, so the businesses must be very close; small dimensions can make great differences in this situation

The lower rents, the ease of accessibility, and the historic character of many buildings all combine to give downtown a considerable potential for new developments, both large and small (including the tenanting of the existing large and small office buildings, the construction of more new office buildings and hotels, the creation of residential living options in the core, and the provision of new and exciting restaurants and shops which can serve downtown workers, conventioners, and residents).

Downtown needs a new marketing and management strategy for entertainment and retail; as one shopkeeper said, "we must learn to sell things you can't get at the mall".

Traffic patterns should be re-examined to assure continued ease of access, but to create at the same time a comfortable pedestrian environment. The Strollway is a great asset to downtown in this way.

The zoning code, in both its Dimensional Requirements (of which there are none for the CB District) and in its Permitted Uses, does not fully support what are now the goals for that area. The fact that an open parking lot and strip shopping center are permitted on 4th Street, and that Adult Establishments and Motor Vehicle Storage Yards are permitted in the same area, are three examples of the inconsistencies that can exist between current objectives and the regulating law for downtown.

The whole effort to make downtown work and feel like a place that is the heart of the city must be based on a complete aspiration to excellence. As one merchant said, it is time to "turn the thermostat up" on our goals and accomplishments, at the level of planning and development as well as at the level of maintaining and merchandising the shops, the restaurants, and the whole public realm.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Planning Needs for the Future

It has become clear in the course of this study that, while a great deal of very positive thinking and working has taken place concerning the improvements to the greater downtown, there is a void in planning for downtown's traditional Core. This fact was evident to everyone interviewed, even if they hadn't read the many reports and recommendations, since they perceived that there is a void in the activity and character at the center of town — an obvious parallel to the void in planning. This condition relates directly to the success of the several new developments that surround the Core, and to the dramatic fact of relocating the buses and the Terminal from 4th Street to 5th Street, at the heart of the Core. The recommendations here are therefore meant to build on what has gone before, to take advantage of new opportunities, and to set in motion the efforts to correct the flaws in the existing conditions. Because planning is not an end in itself, it is expected that the proposals for planning made here must result in actions that continue to move Winston-Salem forward.

While these proposals are general in nature, it must be acknowledged that the participants in this process made many provocative and valuable specific suggestions that should be remembered when new planning and development takes place. There is no shortage of good ideas and constructive energy in downtown Winston-Salem, so there should be the usual great optimism about these tasks — as there is about everything else you undertake.

The result of this study, therefore, is that the following observations and proposals will be the basis of the action recommendations that are listed below, and which are the substance of this entire report:

"As the dominant location of government, official headquarters, arts and meeting spaces, the Downtown Core will be Winston-Salem's strongest anchor ..."

— 1983 Central Area Action Plan

Plan of the Walkable Core

Business Development Plan

There is a need to establish a Business Development Plan for the Core area that includes — approximately — 3rd, 4th, 5th (and perhaps 6th) Streets, from east of Main Street to some point west of Poplar Street. This plan should primarily identify the kinds of businesses (e.g., restaurants, service retail, entertainment, business services, etc.) that could well be located here, especially at the sidewalk level, but also in the upper floors of the existing buildings.

In addition, it should also recommend opportunities for downtown housing, especially including the reuse of existing buildings. It is very important in this recommendation to note the impacts of the new office, cultural, and convention developments at the periphery of the core, and of the bus terminal relocation to 5th Street.

Because tourism and the convention industry are perhaps the most rapidly growing businesses in downtown, the plan must identify the needs of visitors that could be provided in the Core. Since downtown has few offerings for convention visitors, actions must be identified that can change the situation, thus improving both the ability to sell the city for conventions, and the overall business and pedestrian activity within the Core.

This development plan should also identify opportunities for larger new developments that could occur within this area, especially on 4th Street, and as close to the center of the center as possible (for instance, the realtors thought that 4th and Cherry Streets was as close as downtown gets to a “prime corner”). This type of development (probably offices, but could include other uses such as hotels) is to be seen as the next step after the completion of Triad Park West (Wachovia, etc.), and must be coordinated with the efforts to fully occupy the RJR and former Wachovia buildings. The purpose of this planning is to set into motion the opportunities for developments that will fully activate 4th Street, and create the vitality that is needed for this to be the center of the whole community.

Finally, this development plan should include establishing methods and schedules for their implementation, and must be coordinated with the on-going development efforts of the Downtown Development Corporation and Winston-Salem Business Inc. It also should be done in concert with the physical design plan described below.



View looking east on 6th Street, at the City Market

Traffic and Parking Plan

The existing traffic patterns should be reevaluated, given the objective of making a more comfortable pedestrian experience in the core area, the completion of the new I-40 that bypasses downtown. The objective of this study should be to slow down the traffic in the shopping and tourist areas, and yet maintain the ease of access that is one of downtown's virtues.

Urban Design Plan

An Urban Design Plan for the core area should be undertaken that is coordinated with the business development plan and the re-thinking of traffic patterns, and should include these areas and concerns:

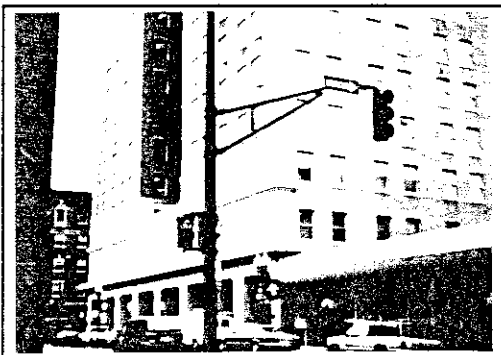
Identification of possible new development sites, and the necessary acquisition and demolition of existing buildings.

Identification of buildings for possible preservation and reuse, including coordination with the city's historic preservation efforts.

Establishment of future parking needs, and strategies and locations for meeting them.

Coordination of both the development and landscape improvement actions with a reconsidered downtown traffic plan.

Creation of a pedestrian movement plan, which identifies comfortable walking connections between the various nodes of the greater downtown area and the Core.



The First Union Building on Fourth Street

Development of a streetscape plan for the sidewalks and other open spaces in the core area that is coordinated with the development and traffic plans, with the new bus terminal plans, and with the existing streetscapes that include the Strollway, the Stevens Center, the Research Park, and the new office buildings at 2nd Street. The purpose of this streetscape plan is to improve the walking connections between the nodes elsewhere in downtown to the Core, and must focus on the length of some walks, the impact of the hilly streets, and the presence of the many existing sidewalk-level blank walls.

Establishment of design and planning standards for both new and renovated construction, to assure that the aspirations for excellence are met, and that each developer's investment (whether large or small) is protected.

Zoning Code Revisions

The zoning code must be evaluated and revised in appropriate ways to assure a coordination between the larger improvement goals for the whole downtown area, with a special focus on its core. This evaluation must consider the Dimensional Requirements as well as the Permitted Land Uses, and should be coordinated to the extent permitted by North Carolina law with the recommended design standards.

Holly Avenue Neighborhood Plan

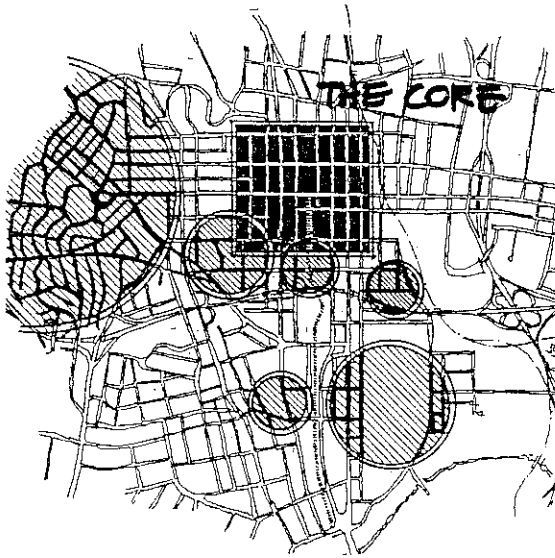
The Holly Avenue Neighborhood Plan should be moved forward, as one of the best opportunities to create more downtown housing. In doing this, the traffic evaluations should study the opportunities to reduce through traffic in the neighborhood, and a revised zoning code should consider changes in the permitted uses (and perhaps other regulations) to better encourage single family and other residential types.

In order to have an on-going implementation strategy for downtown — especially for the Core area — a Business Improvement District should be considered. These special taxing and management districts are being used with extraordinary

success in cities across the nation to accomplish the same objectives that Winston-Salem has for its downtown.

Recommendations for Specific Planning Actions:

In order to accomplish the tasks recommended in these Conclusions, the use of specifically qualified consultants who will work in concert with city and volunteer agencies, are necessary. An assessment of those tasks suggests these consultants:



Location of the Core at the heart of the larger Downtown

Economic Planning Consultant

This consultant will collaborate closely with the DDC, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Winston-Salem Business Inc., will also work with the Planning Board and the Central Winston-Salem Association, and will provide the following services regarding the Core of downtown:

Analyses of retail and other commercial markets.

Assessment of office development possibilities and opportunities.

Identification of the types and sizes of potential retail, restaurant, entertainment, and other pedestrian-oriented businesses, and of their desirable general locations.

Identification of possibilities for new large development types (e.g., hotel, office), and their possible sizes, programs, and locations.

Identification of possibilities for uses for the upper floors of existing buildings.

Identification of methods of implementing the business and development recommendations.

Coordination of the recommendations with the Urban Design Consultant, in creating a total action plan for the Core area.

Assistance in gaining support for the recommendations.

Urban Design Consultant

This advisor must collaborate as a partner with the Planning Board and its staff, will provide the following services; note that many of them could be specifically shared with the staff:

Analysis of sites and buildings for development opportunities, both as new buildings and renovations.

Analysis of the development possibilities proposed by the Economic Planning Consultant, for “fit” into sites and buildings.

Determination of new parking needs, and the possibilities for meeting them.

Identification of the desirable walking routes that will link the core to the other nodes of downtown (including, obviously, the use of the Strollway).

Collaboration with the Traffic Consultant in evaluating possible changes to downtown traffic patterns, especially as they apply to the core and the Holly Avenue. neighborhood.

Creation of an overall public landscape plan for the core area, that is linked to the adjacent node areas, and that is the result of the walking and driving analyses and planning; identify possible public improvement costs.

Analysis of and revisions to the zoning code, especially as it applies to the core and the Holly Avenue. neighborhood.

Establishment of design and site planning guidelines for the core area, to supplement the zoning code and to give direction to new developments and improvements.

Cooperation with the Economic Planning Consultant, in creating the action plan for the core.

Creation of a phasing plan for business development, private investment projects, and public improvements.

Assistance in gaining all necessary approvals.

Traffic and Parking Consultant

This consultant must collaborate closely with the Planning Board and with City Department of Transportation, and will provide the following services:

Analysis of existing traffic conditions (noting especially the opening of the new I-40.

Recommendations for changes to the existing patterns, to accommodate new growth and better pedestrian use of the sidewalks.

Coordination with the Urban Design Consultant, in the creation of the overall action plan.

Business Improvement District Consultant

This very special advisor must collaborate closely with several city agencies, the Planning Board, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Central Winston-Salem Association; this consultant should provide the following services:

Identification of the possible area of the District.

Determination of the services to be provided by the District.

Determination of the annual budgets of the District organization.

Determination of the nature of the District management organization.

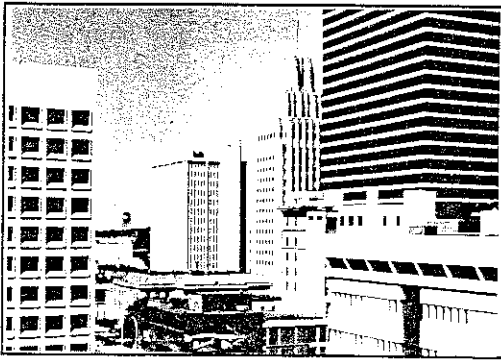
Establishment of the taxing structure of the organization.

Assistance in gaining all necessary approvals for the implementation of the recommendations.

(Note that this work can take place simultaneously with that of the planning consultants, so some measure of cooperation would be valuable).

Conclusion: an Overview and the Final Products

The purpose of this planning is to create a path for action that makes the heart of the Downtown — its Core — a lively and active place, that replaces the void that is felt now, and which therefore will bring all of Downtown together into one great “place” that is the common ground for the whole city. Action is the essential word; these planning proposals are structured to undertake what has been the customary Winston-Salem method, which is to do something. Therefore they should be called a “Business Development Plan” even before they are thought of as a physical design plan; therefore business recruitment and the Business Improvement District are essential parts of the process. The “vision” for the heart of the city must be created and agreed upon, but that vision must be the first step in the actual building of successful Downtown.



A thriving Downtown

The final products, in order to be action-oriented, should be a combination of working reports for use by the policy makers, and sales-oriented products (brochures, videos, models, illustrations, etc.) for the use by the business recruitment and downtown management teams. Smart thinking and aggressive action must take place hand-in-hand, and the work products must reflect that; in the end the real “final product” must be the new Downtown.