

PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Create a plan to encourage and support development of office space, business park and industrial sites, preferably in campus-style form
- Protect floodplain and similar areas not suitable for development
- Make areas for open space accessible to businesses and the public, including an area for a community park (with soccer fields, dog park, playgrounds and picnic shelter)
- Design an integrated road network with internal and external connections
- Minimize impacts to adjacent existing development
- Support development of the proposed interchange/intersection on NC 16 as a key to economic development in the county
- Enhance stormwater protection by including LID (Low Impact Design) practices and design as amenities with environmental and educational opportunities

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The study area for the plan is bounded by the southern county line to the south, CSX railroad to the east, the developed parcels along NC16 Business on the west and existing residential development (south of Sifford Road) to the north. The planning area is bisected by NC16 which will include an at-grade intersection for primary access. The only existing access to this area is an undeveloped road off NC16 Business at the county line. There has been no development within the planning area to speak of and is vacant at this time. A high tension Duke Energy transmission line and accompanying right-of-way bisects the property (east to west). Parallel to the rail line is a major stream, two tributaries along with environmentally sensitive areas (including areas of wetlands, floodplains, and poor soils) which will impact development potential.

A development plan was created in 2008 by a private firm, however due to economic conditions and a change in housing needs, that plan was abandoned. That plan included 117 acres of commercial/office land use, 51 acres of retail land use, 71 acres of medium density housing, and open space of approximately 65 acres. With this amount of land, the planning area totals approximately 304 acres that are primarily vacant that previously planned. Additionally there are four vacant parcels which are included in the principal focus of this area plan, bringing the total amount of land in the study area to roughly 450 acres, which excludes NC 16 right-of-way.

LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

Office & Business Park:

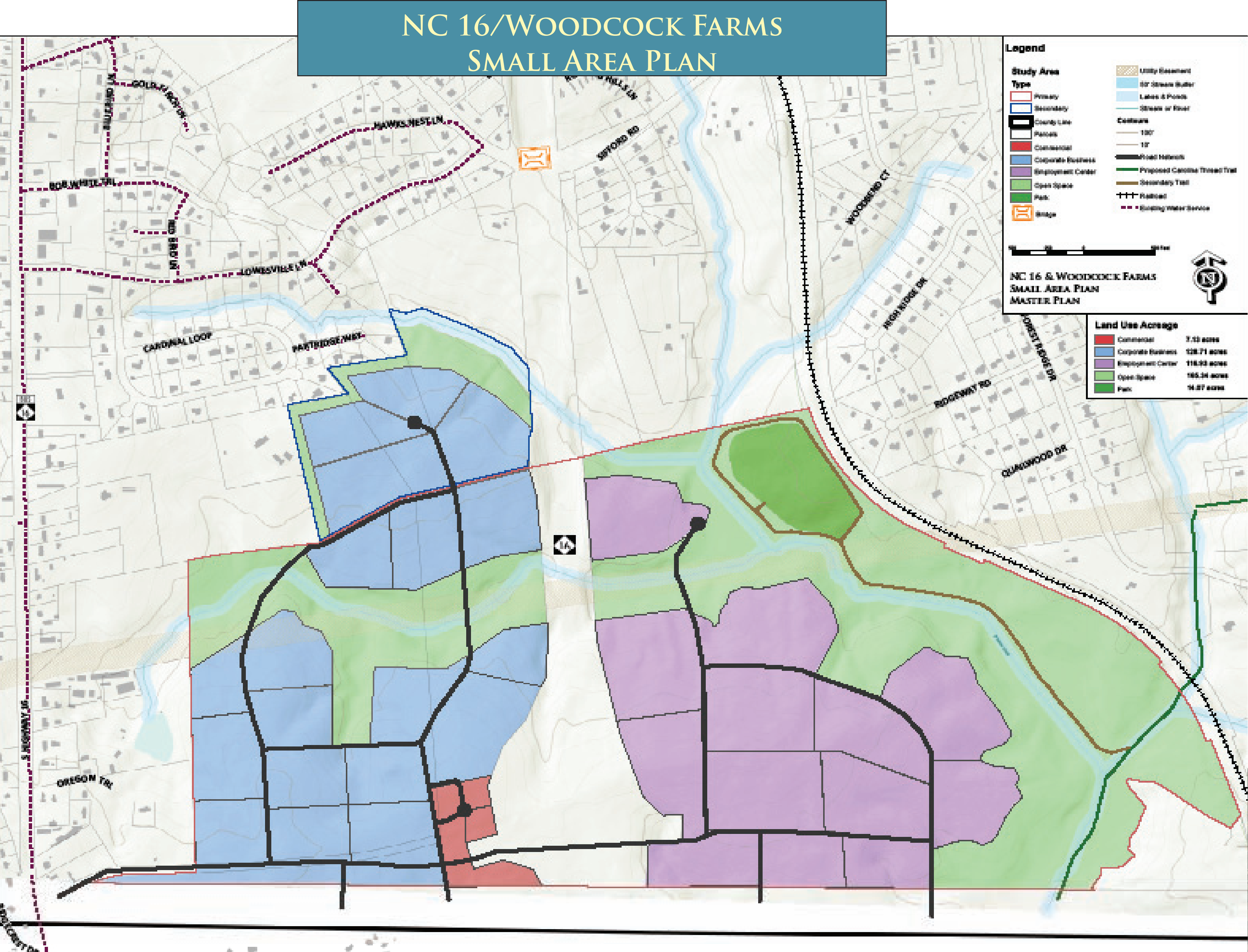
The primary development emphasis of this area is to establish a desirable location for corporate, service and manufacturing tenants combined with employment opportunities for Lincoln County residents. Encompassing approximately 130 acres, this section is designed to allow integrated multi-parcel campus style and individual site development. The office park is located between NC16 and NC16 Business for ease of accessibility to existing development and to those traveling from outside the county. The roadway is proposed to be a boulevard with a landscaped median to represent the overall quality of the Class A Office Park development. The other roads within the area are a two-lane design with sidewalks to encourage walking and access to amenities. As with all the areas of the plan, there are direct and indirect opportunities to include the open space into the development of the sites. The Business Park area is shown in light blue on the plan map.

Commercial / Service:

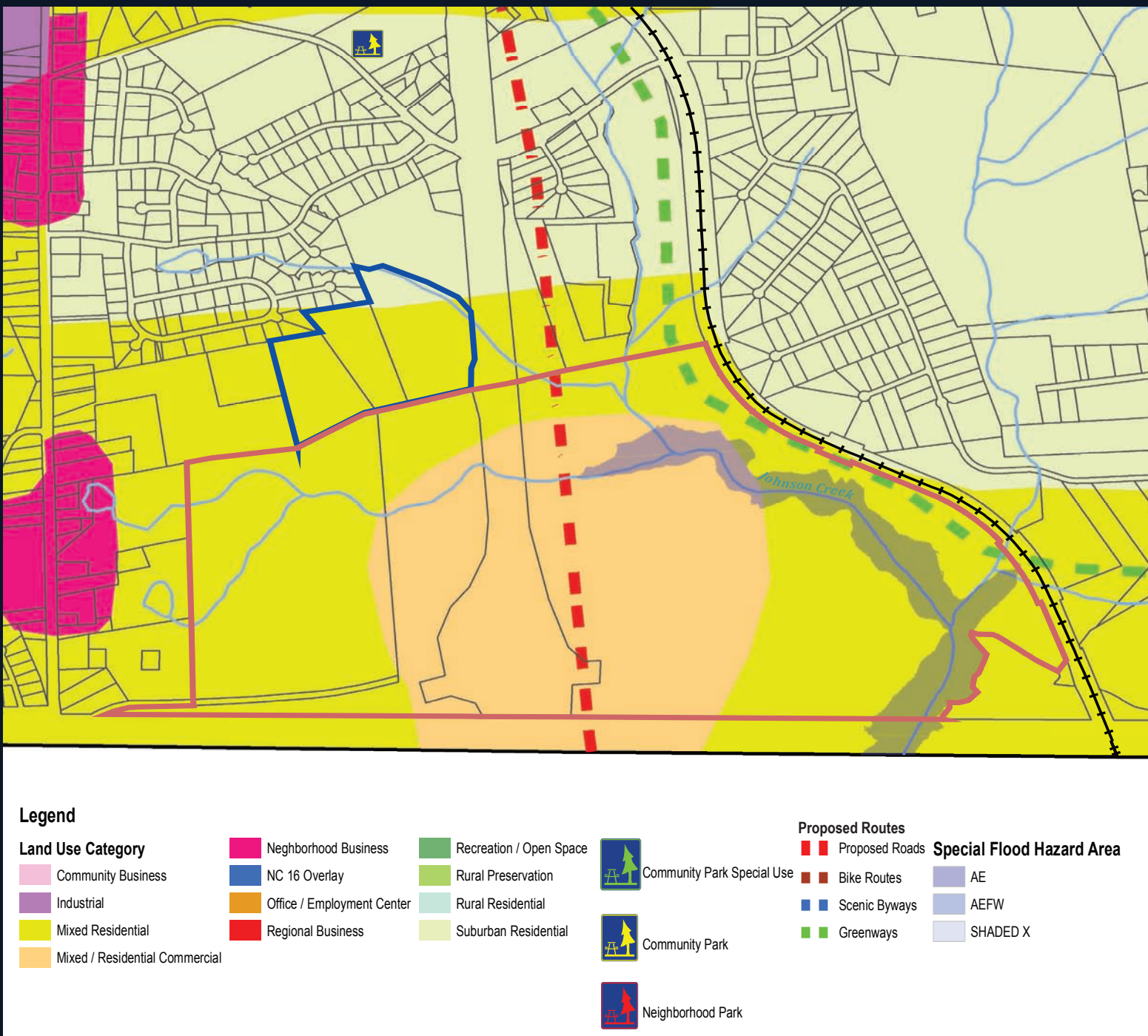
The area along NC16 at the proposed interchange/intersection with NC16 will be primarily developed as a commercial node offering service and retail commercial to support the office and employment center areas. Developing as a service area, this site will be a destination point for restaurants, convenience and similar support services including such uses as a copy center for example. The location was chosen to offer these services to existing development along NC16 Business so that those users would not have to cross NC16 to access them. Additionally, being a highly visible location at the proposed interchange/intersection, businesses can also attract regional traffic as well. This area is shown as light red in color.

Employment Center:

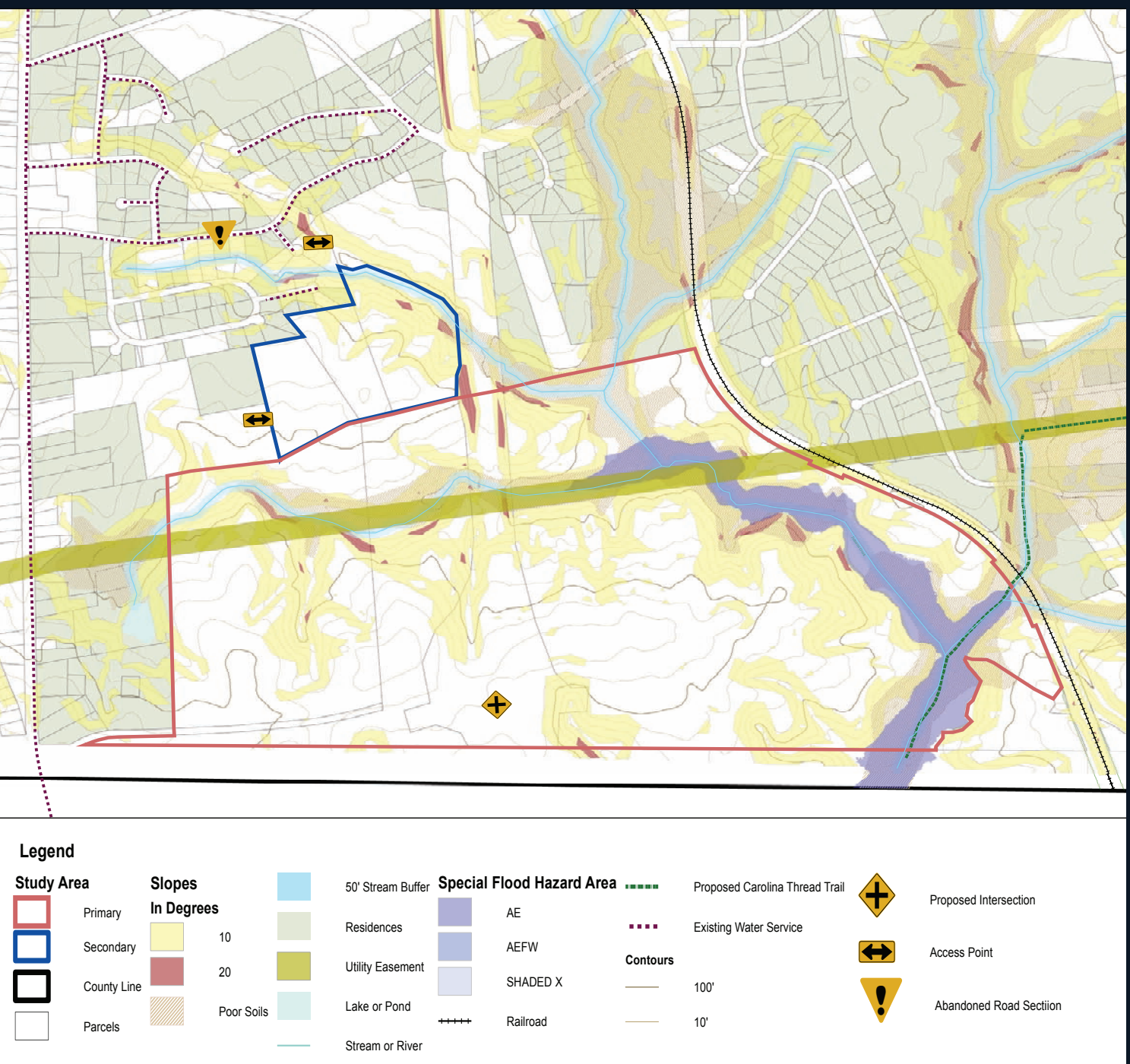
On the east side of NC16, a new industrial park is recommended as employment center / industrial land. This area abuts new NC16, providing excellent visibility and direct access to NC16 for larger vehicles and employees. The location was selected to eliminate the need for trucks and deliveries to travel on NC16 Business or other local streets. There is ample open space included in this area (as with all areas) to provide connections to walking trails by employees, direct and indirect connection opportunities and a desirable setting. Sidewalks along the roadways offer access to these areas as well. This area is depicted in purple.



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN



DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS



CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE



Open Space and Conservation access comprise a large portion of this small area plan, the majority of which is classified as passive or conservation open space. Roughly 118 acres of open space spans the eastern most portion of the plan boundary. Two smaller swaths of open space totaling roughly 47 acres follows streams that flow under Highway 16 to the western portions. There are also opportunities for more formal types of public open space such as courtyard commons and parks.

To serve the neighboring residential areas, a park site could easily be located within the northeastern area of the small area plan. An eight to ten acre site would easily accommodate many of the features of a neighborhood park. Lincoln County Parks and Recreation does not currently have any facilities within that southeastern section of the county. The need for a neighborhood park, as well as a larger community park, was recommended for this area in the County's Comprehensive System-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan completed in 2006. Amenities such as picnic shelters, restrooms, and playground equipment along with disc golf, a dog park, exercise stations, horseshoe pits, soccer fields and volleyball are all possibilities that the county is interested in pursuing. The park, in addition to being a destination point for hikers and the community, would provide the support facilities needed for the trails network - restrooms, water stations, and parking. The stream corridors and utility easement provide excellent passageways for trails. These corridors link all sections of the plan area, as well as connect to the Carolina Thread Trail, a fifteen-county regional trail system. Access to the open space is an equally important objective of the plan. The design of the boulevard loop system has addressed this objective by designating a number of formal public access points, which are conveniently adjacent to the road and are interwoven in the variety of land uses within the plan.

The potential for a neighborhood park/community park and active as well as passive open spaces including trails, a tree save area, and preservation of wildlife habitat are all key goals for the use of the open space and conservation portions of this plan. In addition to encouraging economic development, the integrated uses of this open space will also improve the quality of life and be an asset to the community and the citizens in all of Lincoln County.

NC 16/WOODCOCK FARMS SMALL AREA PLAN



A DETAILED LOOK AT THE LANDS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by the Lincoln County Planning Staff and Planning Board-June 2012

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this plan is to identify and guide development through a well thought-out development plan and growth scenario for the vacant lands. The plan relates land uses, access and development concepts seen to fit the land based on built existing conditions, driveway cuts, traffic flow, streams and topography.

The new NC 16 was constructed through the study area as part of a new bypass and includes a proposed future interchange / intersection on the site. The location of the study area is at the southeastern end of Lincoln County with direct access to Charlotte, making it a location for new businesses wanting to be close to the city and the international airport, but outside of the urban traffic congestion and higher land costs. The location, access and present conditions make the land desirable for a Class A office/business campus and industrial park. This small area plan location was selected due to the availability of a large vacant tract, proximity in the region to workforce and access, and the lack of similar development in the county.

CORPORATE CAMPUS PLANNING

Corporate campus design and development involves all the functional components of a site, aesthetic qualities and corporate image. A well designed campus will meet needs relative to pedestrians, traffic, deliveries, shipping, stormwater and other functional demands - both for the current plan and for future expansion.

Perhaps, the most important criteria in planning a corporate campus is deciding on a location. Of course, many factors play key roles in determining that location such as highway access and infrastructure. Access to the highway increases product speed to market and provides a quicker commute for employees. Access to a state highway is even more critical for industrial type uses, as this provides a guarantee that the road was constructed to standards that can withstand large cargo (tractor trailer) style carriers. Understanding where access to local utilities is available along with sufficient capacity to accommodate the density and demand of a corporate campus is equally important. Electricity, water and sewer, natural gas, and telecommunication capabilities should all be considered.

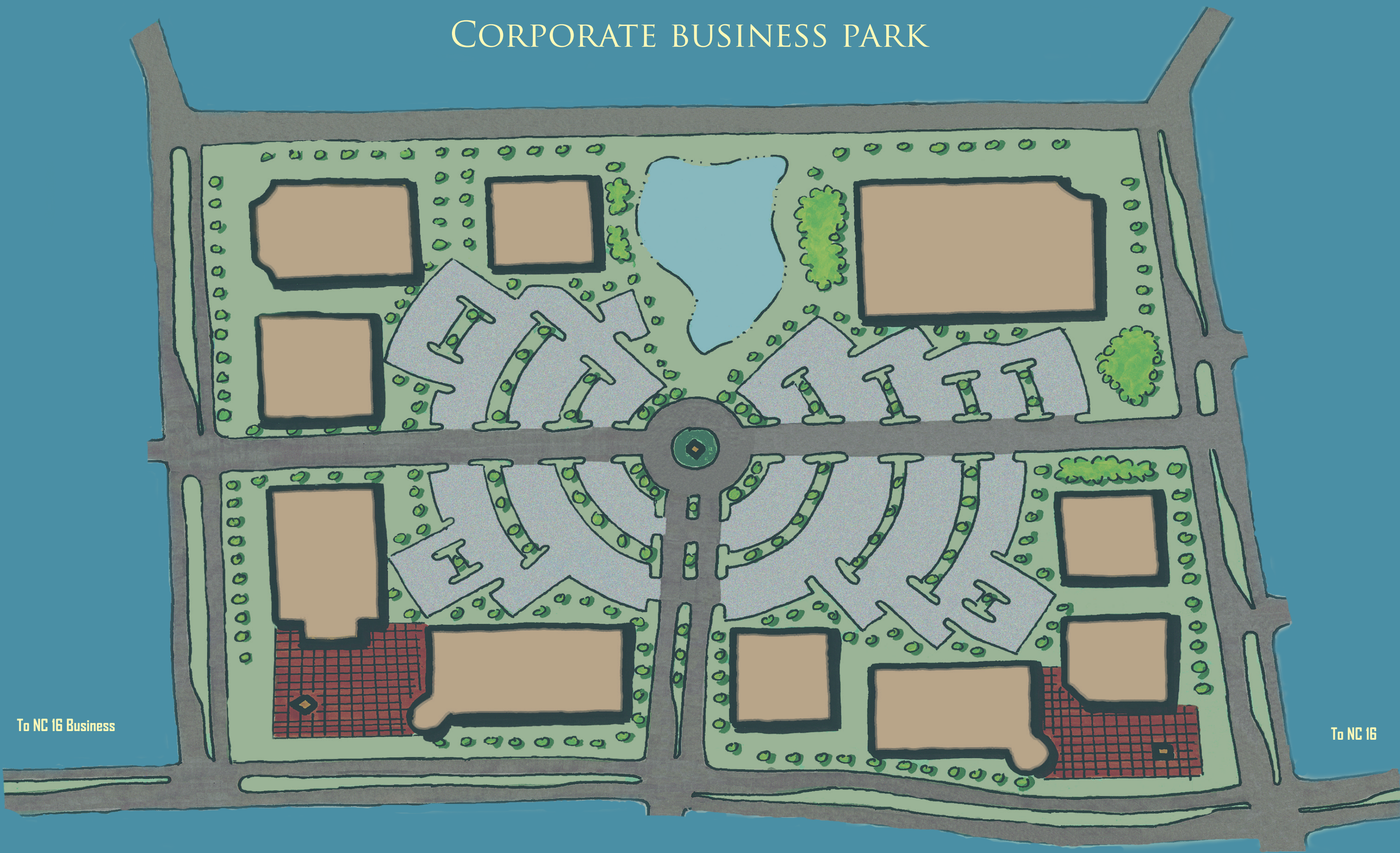
There are other important factors such as topography, soil conditions, and prior uses of the site, that are a part of a location analysis and have a specific importance with regard to corporate and industrial campuses. Due to the size of these style parks or campuses, it becomes challenging to find land that is suitable. What is suitable for one type of industry may not be suitable for another. The soil's load bearing capacity may not support the heavy machinery housed in an industrial building, but in the same vein may be more than appropriate for an office building. Whether the site previously existed as agricultural land or some other type of use, such as industrial or manufacturing should be noted. Having knowledge of these factors beforehand can minimize the potential environmental risk and financial burdens associated with land clearing, grading, and environmental remediation.

Obtaining an inventory of surrounding uses of land is essential. If land uses of a similar nature exist in close proximity of the site, then the potential for opposition is usually minimal. If there are conflicting or different types of land uses in the immediate area, it may be necessary to create a transition of uses between those that conflict and the site being studied. Utilizing natural buffers, open space, and water bodies may also aid in this transition.

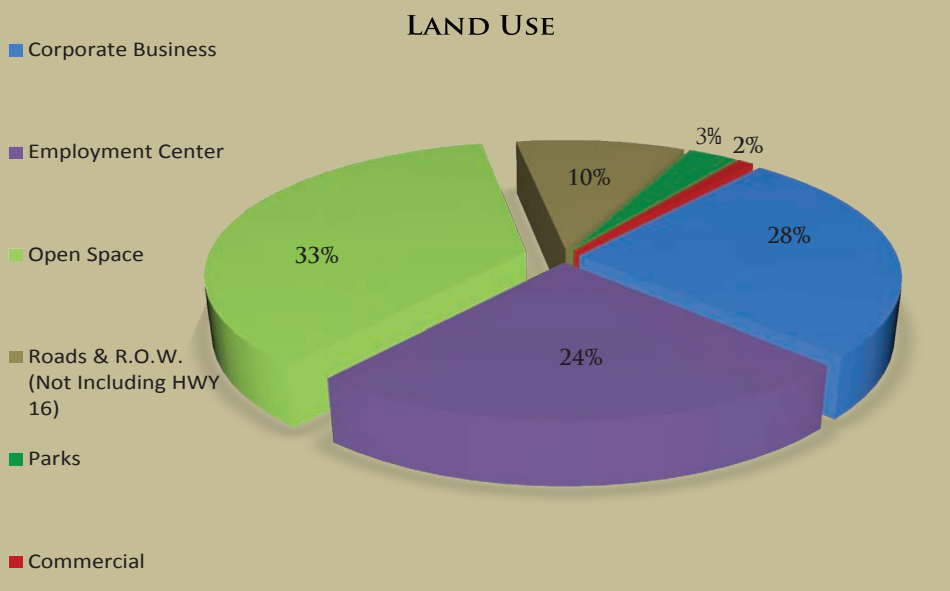
All of the above information shall be accredited to Deloitte G Touche, Inc., Site Selection Magazine ©, and the Ohio State University Extension.



CORPORATE BUSINESS PARK

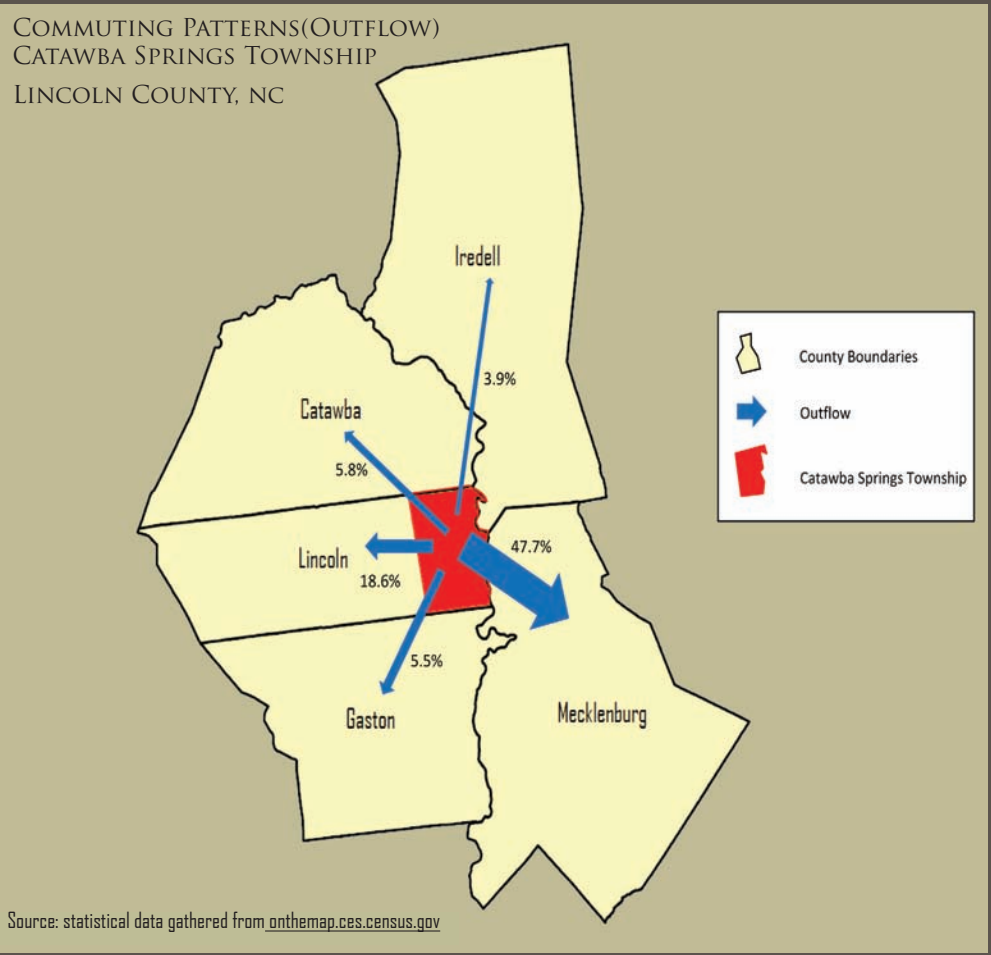


ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The NC 16/Woodcock Farms Small Area Plan has been designed to accommodate an Office/Business Park as well as a large amount of open space land uses. However, this plan heavily focuses the developable lands of the area on "corporate business" and "employment center" type land uses. As the graph to the left points out, the percentage for these uses reaches far beyond that of the others. These uses will provide office space and other facilities for regional corporate enterprises, local companies/businesses, and various types of light manufacturing. They will house professionals with a broad spectrum of training and moderate to advanced skill sets. Creating job growth and more importantly, "quality job growth" is the overarching challenge in this planning scenario.

Numerous factors have played a key role in why this Small Area Plan was developed primarily as an employment hub. Currently, commuting patterns for the population of the Catawba Springs Township shows a rather large percentage of workers traveling into Mecklenburg County. Due to the city of Charlotte's size and location in the region, the number of corporate business employment opportunities that are available there far outweigh those of eastern Lincoln County. While Lincoln County's residents employment in Mecklenburg County is clearly unavoidable, there is strong potential for employment opportunities to remain local. More importantly than the potential for those opportunities to remain local is the actual need for them to remain local. The demographics of the area in conjunction with the inventory of existing land use shows that the current population is considerably underserved. The need for employment opportunities becomes even further apparent as fuel costs continue to rise and the average commuting times range between thirty minutes to an hour-one way.



Providing the area with additional employment opportunities will increase the tax base and stimulate investment in surrounding properties. Thus, the local business market will benefit as a result and commercial real estate brokers, construction firms, and property owners will benefit.

This Small Area Plan provides the designated land and options necessary for the local employment opportunities mentioned. Careful study and specific economic development planning strategies were applied when creating this plan. This careful analysis of the area was partly focused on what characteristics corporate businesses look for when relocating or expanding. Identifying physical development constraints and considering proximity to a major roadway/interchange possessed the most significance among others. Due to the implementation of these strategies, the Small Area Plan offers an attractive development opportunity for corporate businesses and industry to locate and provides the Lincoln Economic Development Agency a more diverse and competitive market in which to maneuver.

CORPORATE BUSINESS PARK

One of the goals of the NC 16 / Woodcock Farms Small Area Plan is to "Create a plan to encourage and support development of office space, business park and industrial sites, preferably in campus-style form." The Planning Staff selected a portion of the planning area to design a campus-style office park development. This section contains four proposed parcels, surrounded by roads with access to open space along the northern edge.

Along the main road connecting NC 16 to NC 16 Business (presently known as Kevin Lane), a boulevard street design is recommended. The street cross section includes a landscaped median, sidewalks and decorative fixtures. The roads surrounding this land also follow the same design, as well as the primary access drive into the campus. This gives people the first impression of the business campus.

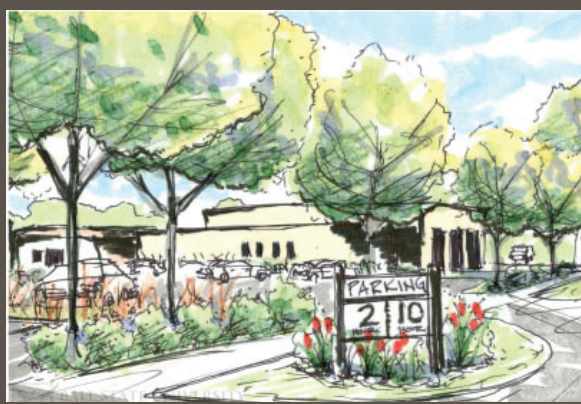
Staff took four individual parcels and designed each to be developed with different building footprints. The northeast parcel is shown to have a single large building with approximately 45,000 square feet (one story). On the northwest parcel, three buildings are shown in various sizes (14,000, 18,000 & 22,000 square feet). The third parcel is shown with two buildings of 20,000 and 24,000 square feet, while the fourth offers more diversity in showing four buildings with the smallest being 12,000 square feet, two buildings being 14,000 each and the fourth building at 22,000 square feet. Naturally, any of these buildings could be multi-story to increase square footage and enhanced architecture.

At the corner of the parcels fronting Kevin Lane, plazas are designed to serve as a local gathering points and more importantly, focal points for the development. All buildings are placed close to the street so that they present a strong image with the parking placed in the interior of the development. The parking is divided by access drives which in turn defines the four separate parcels. This conceptual plan depicts how those parcels could be developed individually. However, this arrangement gives a perception of a unified development in a campus-style form where all elements work in concert with each other.

As an amenity to the campus, a large stormwater pond is located on the north end of the site. The pond also serves as an environmental link or connection to the open space areas. Otherwise stormwater is treated by a series of bioswales and rain gardens placed throughout the development, reducing the infrastructure cost and adding natural places for vegetation and environmental education. This type of combined system treats the runoff more effectively and at a reduced cost.

This design is conceptual in nature and shows how several planning principles come together in development of a Class A Office and Business Park. These potential development patterns shown are NOT mandated to be built as depicted. It is drawn to depict certain elements and recommendations of the NC 16 / Woodcock Farm Small Area Plan and take into account the existing built and natural features of the land. It is encouraged that the property owners use this plan as a guide when, at some point in time, development is considered, but may offer alternative development patterns that meet the intent and recommendations of this small area plan.

DEVELOPMENT MODEL



Parking and Pedestrian Compatibility



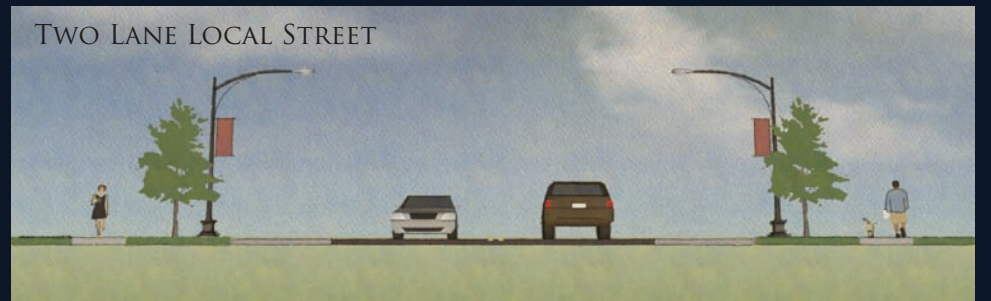
Creative Architectural Design



Functional Boulevard Network

The three renderings above should be credited to Ball State University's Imagine Griffiths, Transportation Nation, and PRWeb.

TRANSPORTATION



The two-lane local street network is utilized throughout the design of this campus and the small area plan as a whole. It is designed to allow efficient traffic flow along the exterior road network, and to efficiently lead to the development's boulevard system.

The two-lane boulevard with the landscaped median is used to create a centralized arterial which serves the corporate business campus with traffic generated from the exterior road network. It is designed to direct traffic volumes into and around the entire site and distribute those volumes evenly into the subsequent interior street networks of each campus.

Connectivity :

As the area develops over time, internal and external connectivity will be essential to maintaining a successful and well operating transportation network. The internal boulevard street system that is designed to serve the employment center and corporate business portions of the development are intentionally looped to create a campus style setting. This type of loop design, as opposed to the conventional "one way in-one way out" cul-de-sac, allows for more efficient traffic flow. It also allows the parcels that are located on the exterior portion of the boundary and the parcels that abut the highway to be easily accessed while providing direct access to open space. NC 16 Business to the west, Sifford Road to the North, and properties that extend southward into Gaston County were examined as additional connection possibilities. These connections make the property access easier and more attractive to new businesses and industry.

NC 16/ Kevin Ln. Intersection :

The intersection of NC 16 and Kevin Lane is currently designed for an "at-grade" crossing similar to that of the design at Optimist Club Rd. and Saint James Church Rd. The final design will be coordinated with NCDOT and county staff prior to obtaining any approval of the project. The small area plan utilizes this intersection as its main focus for development and rightfully so. The intersection will provide equal access to both the eastern and western portions of the development and will designate the beginning and ending points for the development's boulevard system. More importantly, the intersection will provide new businesses and industry with direct access to the highway. This vital connection not only links new business and industry directly to Charlotte for easy distribution, but also acts as an alternative for commuters.

Alternative modes of transportation :

An alternative (non-motorized) transportation option is also available within this plan in the form of a pedestrian walking/nature trail. The trail will connect with the proposed Carolina Thread Trail at the southeastern edge of the plan boundary and will continue northward along the creek side, creating a traditional "green way" loop that will provide constant access to a 14 acre park. In addition to the trail will be internal sidewalks throughout the campuses to connect various buildings to each other and to the commercial area of the plan where potential restaurants and shopping will be located. Also, the sidewalks will connect office buildings to open space and other office park amenities such as lakes, pergolas, and plazas.