

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE  
"A World Class City"

**Department of Neighborhood Development Services**

City Hall Post Office Box 911  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902  
Telephone 434-970-3182  
Fax 434-970-3359  
[www.charlottesville.org](http://www.charlottesville.org)



August 7, 2013

**TO: Charlottesville Planning Commission, Neighborhood Associations &  
News Media**

# Please Take Notice

The Charlottesville City Council and Charlottesville Planning Commission will hold a Joint Work Session on **Tuesday August 27, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. at City Space (100 5th Street NE)**.

## AGENDA

1. Comprehensive Plan Implementation
  - a. General Comprehensive Plan
  - b. Small Area Planning
    - (1) Standards and Design Manual Update
    - (2) Code and Ordinance Audit Project
    - (3) Prioritize Small Areas for Future Consideration

cc: City Council  
Maurice Jones  
Aubrey Watts  
Jim Tolbert  
Neighborhood Planners  
Melissa Thackston, Kathy McHugh  
Mary Joy Scala  
Craig Brown, Rich Harris

# CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



## MEMORANDUM

To: Charlottesville Planning Commission and City Council  
From: Jim Tolbert, Director & Missy Creasy, Planning Manager  
Date: August 13, 2013  
Re: August 27, 2013 Work Session materials – Comprehensive Plan Implementation

Planning Commission and City Council scheduled a joint work session to discuss implementation of the Comprehensive Plan following the plan adoption. Plan implementation is a multifaceted process with a number of people and resources involved. Many items included in the plan address ongoing and long term initiatives as well as one time projects and items that will be implemented if resources are available.

To make best use of this short discussion time, we are breaking the session into two parts. The first will be focused on the Comprehensive Plan as a whole and the second on Small Area Planning.

### General Comprehensive Plan Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan contains a myriad of community priorities. Objectives are contained in different chapters which focus on specific topics yet link to one another. With so many considerations, it can be very difficult to focus on items for implementation and even more difficult to determine what comes first. This is an opportunity for the Commission and Council to start that conversation. The Comprehensive Plan chapters should be one of the main items you review in preparation for this discussion. In addition, the City and County Planning Commissions spent time reviewing each of the areas contained in the plans for areas where joint planning could occur. The report from this exercise may also help in determining where to start in the implementation process.

As you review the Goals and Objectives, the Implementation Chapter and the Joint City County Planning Commission Goals report, think about the following questions:

1. Which areas should the City focus on first? Why?
2. Which items do you feel could be accomplished within 1-2 years?
3. Which items need to be addressed specifically by the City Council's Strategic Planning Process?
4. What additional resources are needed to provide Implementation input?

### Small Area Planning

The Comprehensive Plan outlines a number of areas where additional planning activities may potentially occur to address opportunities available in those areas. Staff has provided a report containing background information as well as some preliminary information to be used to begin thinking through this process. It is felt that this initial discussion would be best used to prioritize the small areas in preparation for Council's Strategic Planning Process which begins in September 2013. As you review the report and prepare for the prioritization discussion, think about the following:

1. How should the Small Area Plan's be prioritized in preparation for City Council's Strategic Planning Process?

*Comprehensive Plan Link for chapter information: <http://www.charlottesville.org/index.aspx?page=3462>*

## **The Livability Project April 5, 2013**

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded a \$999,000 grant to the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) to develop a Livability Implementation Plan for the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO area. The process to develop this plan, referred to as the Livable Communities Planning Project (Livability Project), builds upon the region's 1998 Sustainability Accords and other area planning documents to integrate cross-cutting strategies for land use, transportation, housing, economic vitality, air and water quality, and energy use. The Livability Project was launched in April 2011 in conjunction with the kick off to the Charlottesville & Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan and Long Range Transportation Plan updates. Since the kick off, project staff have assisted in coordinating public input into the three plan updates.

The process to develop the Livability Project has been a continuation of decades of cooperative planning efforts formally set in place in 1986 through the Three Party Agreement. This Agreement between the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and the University of Virginia (UVA) created the Planning Action Coordination Council (PACC) to oversee planning and development coordination in areas of adjoining or overlapping jurisdiction.

Areas "A," "B," and "C" were shown on a map to delineate the areas of adjoining or overlapping jurisdiction. Area "A" are University-owned properties, Area "B" contains privately-owned properties that span the City-County boundary, and for which mutual interest exists. Area "C" is everything that is not part of Area "A" or "B." In years past, properties in Area B had specific plans to guide future development. These specific plans are updated and are expected to be part of the City and County's Comprehensive Plans. In addition to Area B work, Charlottesville, Albemarle and University of Virginia have worked with TJPDC on regional transportation planning under the auspices of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The partners also work closely on planning related to diverse issues of mutual concern.

The grant expectations are for completion of five primary products:

1. Common Map

This product is a single map depicting in a consistent fashion the Future Land Use Plans of Charlottesville and Albemarle County, the UVA Grounds Plan and fiscally constrained transportation projects in the CA MPO Long Range Transportation Plan. This product is intended to assist all participants including Planning Commissions and the public in visualizing the future plans for the area.

2. Performance Measurement System

This product is intended to depict the most important measurements of the status of the Charlottesville-Albemarle area through quantitative data. The measurements being selected are those that portray the priorities for the area as expressed in the Comprehensive Plans of the two localities. Data that is incorporated into the Performance Measurement System has been chosen due to its ready availability and regular schedule for updates allowing the performance measurements to be easily updated and tracked in the future.

3. Code and Ordinance Review

The Code and Ordinance Review is intended to create a list of topics in the Charlottesville and Albemarle Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance that should be reviewed based on policy changes adopted in the updated Comprehensive Plans. It is intended to be used by Planning Commissioners and staff over the next several years to make sure that the policy changes in the Comprehensive Plans get incorporated into the Zoning and Subdivision ordinances which are the legal implementing documents.

4. Sustainability Initiatives

The Sustainability Initiatives report will identify key sustainability issues facing the area and suggest approaches by which public and private community leaders can work cooperatively to address those issues.

5. Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

The purpose of this product is to support the required updates of the Comprehensive Plans of the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County.

Specific activities expected in development of the plan included the following:

1. Development of a Local Plans Database

This product was created by the TJPDC staff to provide a tool to efficiently search a compilation of over 12,000 goals, objectives, strategies and action items based on key issues and topics identified in 82 local planning documents from the project study area. Use of the Local Plans Database allows members of the public to quickly access goals, objectives, strategies and recommendations related to any topic or combination of topics. It also can be used by staff members to quickly identify everything that has been adopted by the localities on any topic.

## 2. Expanded Public Input

An expanded public input process was provided for both the City and County Comprehensive Plan updates through the following activities:

- a. Community Outreach Series - In the fall and winter of 2011/12 a Community Outreach series was conducted. These workshops touched on a wide variety of issues, including environment, land use, transportation, housing, economic drivers, community facilities and services, and historic resources. Attendees were asked to provide feedback on existing goals and actions being taken to implement the goals.
- b. Questionnaires – Public input was also sought to support the Comprehensive Plan updates through a number of questionnaires. These questionnaires were distributed online or at events and broadened the number of people that provided input on the issues. Questionnaires sought input on the Performance Measurement System, Housing and Economic Drivers, Transportation, Historic and Scenic Resources and on Community Priorities. Received input was analyzed by project staff and reported to the public, Planning Commissioners and locality staff for consideration in the Comprehensive Plans.
- c. OneCommunity Conversations – The OneCommunity Conversations were a series of workshops held in October 2012. These workshops shared findings from the Community Priorities Questionnaire and solicited feedback on shared planning goals for Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Four workshops were held at different locations, but all included the same content and format. The workshops utilized a focus group approach structured around facilitated small groups whose comments were written down by recorders.

## 3. A Joint Planning Commission Process

One of the most important activities in the Sustainable Communities Planning Project was the Joint Planning Commission process. Over the course of a year and a half, the Charlottesville and Albemarle Planning Commissions met together nine times in joint session. These sessions allowed Planning Commissioners to discuss issues of overlapping concern, share existing approaches and identify key issues that needed to be addressed by both localities. Through the course of this process, the two Planning Commissions identified eight areas of joint interest for discussion and recommendations; Economic Development, Entrance Corridors, Environment, Housing, Land Use, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, and Historic Preservation. The Planning Commissions ultimately

agreed on an overall direction in these areas that are important for both the localities.

At the January 2013 Joint Planning Commission meeting the two commissions identified two priorities for implementation:

1) Planning for a unified vision of the Rivanna River Corridor by the two localities that supports the river corridor as a destination and develops a shared vision for parks, trails and recreational opportunities associated with the river;

2) Planning for a coordinated sidewalk network across City-County boundaries and dedicated bike-pedestrian connections across physical barriers within the community.

These priorities are identified in each locality's Comprehensive Plan Draft as of April 5, 2013.

The final version of the Vision and Goal Statements, as approved by the two planning commissions at their meeting on January 15, 2013, is below. The Vision and Goal Statements will be incorporated into the updated Comprehensive Plans by the two local governments using approaches that are appropriate within the structure of the updated Comprehensive Plan documents. As a result, the presentation of the Vision and Goal Statements is somewhat different in the two plans and may be modified by City Council and Board of Supervisors. One of the most important benefits of the HUD Sustainable Communities Planning project for the Charlottesville-Albemarle area has been the input from the entire community, opportunities to learn about how each locality addresses areas of common interest and collaborative efforts by the two Planning Commissions to jointly identify and prioritize vision and goals for the entire community.

## Charlottesville & Albemarle County Joint Vision and Goal Language

Final February 19, 2013

### **Economic Development**

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County recognize the necessity of vibrant regional economic relationships and will work together toward a strong, diversified economy creating stability and opportunities for advancement in our communities.*

To do this, the City and County will:

- Continue to coordinate staff efforts to support regional economic development, including collaboration with the University of Virginia.
- Improve opportunities for employment centers that are connected to community amenities, housing, and services in the City and in the County's Development Areas.
- Coordinate with education partners – elementary, middle, high schools, as well as PVCC and CATEC – to provide training for locally based jobs.
- Support a range of businesses in identified target industry areas (bioscience & medical, business & financial, information technology & defense, and agribusiness).
- Encourage land use practices and policies that promote vibrancy in the local economy through cultural industries including heritage tourism, entertainment, agritourism, local food, and art, and entertainment.
- Improve opportunities for entrance and re-entry into, and advancement within the workforce by encouraging a diversity of training and placement programs designed to help all citizens, regardless of education or income, secure and retain jobs in our community.
- Identify opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurship and develop policies that encourage innovation.

### **Entrance Corridors**

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County will work together to more consistently enhance the visual quality and multi-modal experiences along the corridors.*

To do this, the City and County will:

- Enhance communication among the University of Virginia and, City and County Boards and Commissions related to proposed changes within Entrance Corridors and other shared boundaries.
- Create distinctive destinations and places through multiple means such as landscaping and urban area walkability
- Establish a consistent approach to signage.

- Coordinate continuity of corridor guidelines between the City and County.
- Enhance and improve the scenic and historic character of each corridor, while connecting historic resources – such as Monticello, Ashlawn-Highland, the University of Virginia, and Court Square – within the community.

## **Environment**

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County will continue to promote a community of green neighborhoods, healthy waterways, clean air, and sustainable natural resources.*

To do this for each aspect of the environment, the City and County will:

- **Air Quality**
  - Encourage multi-modal transportation and focus development and redevelopment in urban areas that are supported by multi-modal transportation facilities that will help to reduce emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases.
  - Encourage industries to be clean and environmentally responsible.
- **Water Quality**
  - Protect drinking water supplies, and associated watershed protection areas.
  - Improve water quality of all of our waterways.
  - Recognize the connection between land use practices and water quality in decision making.
  - Coordinate actions intended to address and meet all appropriate water quality standards.
- **Stormwater**
  - Improve stormwater infrastructure and reduce stormwater runoff.
  - Encourage low-impact development techniques and practices through land development regulations, education, and incentives.
- **Agriculture**
  - Improve the viability of local agriculture through concentrating development in the city areas identified for greater intensity of use and higher densities and county development areas while strengthening measures that protect agriculture in the rural areas.
  - Recognize the shared interests between the City and County in promoting a strong local food economy.
- **Vegetation and Biodiversity**
  - Recognize the benefits of biological diversity and encourage the retention and use of native plants.
  - Encourage establishment, maintenance, and replenishment of urban tree canopy in the developed areas, as a means of promoting urban green space, as well as supporting stormwater runoff reduction efforts
- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation**
  - Continue to develop resource and energy conservation strategies and practices applicable to both public and private facilities.



- **Disposal Practices**
  - Promote re-use and recycling.
  - Encourage programs to eliminate roadside litter.

## **Historic Preservation**

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County will enhance the historic character of the region by fostering community awareness of our historic and cultural resources and promoting the preservation of designated structures and areas.*

To do this, the City and County will:

- Prepare and maintain coordinated information detailing requirements, responsibilities and support programs for eligible, significant and designated resources.
- Collaborate on tourism outreach related to historic resources.
- Prepare, maintain, and make publically available a single map of formally designated City and County historic resources to be made available as a layer on both city and county data systems.
- Encourage designation of historic buildings, sites, districts, structures and objects through state and federal programs.
- Encourage local historic designations where appropriate in cooperation with neighborhoods.
- Collaborate with the University of Virginia, Ashlawn-Highland, and Monticello and other community organizations on historic preservation matters.

## **Housing**

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County will each have a range of housing types that support various incomes, ages, and levels of mobility. These housing types should be connected to community amenities, parks, trails and services in the City and in the County's Development Areas.*

To do this, the City and County will:

- Develop joint City-County housing goals, both for market-priced and affordable units.
- Explore the idea of a Regional Housing Authority.
- Encourage mixed income communities.
- Facilitate collaboration and coordination among various housing staff, committees, builders and organizations to ensure an appropriate range of housing choices for all community members.

- Develop policies to encourage housing opportunities suitable for healthy aging and for people with disabilities, located in close proximity to community services and amenities, recreational resources and connected to multi-modal transportation corridors.
- Promote housing located near employment centers in the City and County Development Areas and optimal multi-modal transportation links between those areas and major employment centers.
- Increase the range of housing type choices, focusing especially on the creation of additional workforce (60%-120% AMI), affordable housing (25%-60% AMI), and deeply affordable (0%-25% AMI) units in the City and the County.

## **Land Use**

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County will support neighborhoods and places that allow residents to live, work, and play near their homes and where attention to the character of new development and redevelopment enhances quality of life.*

To do this, the City and County will:

- Encourage development and redevelopment in areas of the City identified for increased density and greater intensity of use, and in County Development Areas where appropriate in order to preserve open space, rural areas, and agricultural areas.
- Promote land use patterns that encourage multi-modal transportation opportunities.
- Coordinate City and County Development Areas land use and infrastructure policies.
- Maintain the distinct character of the Rural Areas.
- As a means of decision coordination, continue to actively participate in the Planning and Coordination Council (PACC), which brings City, County and University leaders together to discuss issues of common concern and interest.
- Establish policies that provide for consideration of development effects on the neighboring locality and shared community resources.
- Create a unified vision for land uses adjacent to the Rivanna River that supports the river corridor as a destination while ensuring the protection and improvement of the river's water quality.

## **Parks and Recreation**

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County will provide a system of high quality public parks, recreation facilities and programming to meet the needs of all residents of the community.*

To do this, the City and County will:

- **Share community visions.**
  - Explore shared use facilities as a first option when contemplating new or replacement recreation facilities within either jurisdiction.
  - Explore the possibility of a Regional Park Authority to manage shared resources including, but not limited to Ivy Creek Natural Area and Darden Towe Park.
  - Develop and implement a shared vision for parks, trails and recreation opportunities associated with the Rivanna River.
  - Work with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to develop a shared vision for recreation opportunities associated with Biscuit Run State Park.
- **Encourage healthy choices among all of our residents.**
  - Create multi-modal connections to and between parks and recreation areas and employment centers.
- **Coordinate shared parks and recreation resources.**
  - Utilize existing Needs Assessment documents to initiate a dialogue on meeting recreation needs.
  - Evaluate existing user fees associated with all parks, facilities and programs to explore reciprocity programs.
  - Coordinate with UVA to identify both active and passive recreation opportunities that may be shared with the larger community.
  - Create a common city/county park, recreation and programming "amenity matrix", and an associated map of amenity locations.
  - Create a regional plan to address need for additional recreational fields.

## Transportation

*Charlottesville and Albemarle County will promote regional multi-modal and accessible transportation options.*

To do this, the City and County will:

- Coordinate transportation planning between Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and the University of Virginia through the Metropolitan Planning Organization by;
  - Storing transportation data in the same format.
  - Coordinating collection of transportation data to facilitate sharing information among Charlottesville, Albemarle County, the University of Virginia, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- Increase and expand transit network efficiency and use.
- Coordinate building the sidewalk network across City-County boundaries and addressing barriers to pedestrian connectivity.
- Provide community education regarding transportation options.
- Collaborate to strengthen intrastate and interstate rail and air transportation opportunities.

- Coordinate to provide and enhance multi-modal connections between employment centers and areas of high residential density.
- Create dedicated bike-pedestrian connections across physical barriers within community.
  - Rivanna River
  - Route 250 – East and West
  - Interstate 64
  - Railroad network
  - City and VDOT system connection
  - Route 29

# Small Area Plans

## BACKGROUND

The Comprehensive Plan adopted by the City Council in 2001 established the vision for Charlottesville to become a more dense, urban walkable community. Using the 1994 Sustainability Accords as a basis, the plan had the following highlights:

- Work by Torti Gallas and Robert Charles Lessor recommended density in the Downtown, West Main Street, and other “corridors” including Emmet Street and Preston Avenue.
- Dense neighborhoods of student housing were recommended immediately adjacent to the University of Virginia to encourage pedestrian activity and discourage the use of automobile by students.
- Entrance Corridor designations were expanded to gain some degree of control on key corridors poised for development.
- Mixed-use was recommended as a highly desirable form of development.

In 2003 a new Zoning Ordinance was adopted with the specific intent to implement changes recommended by the Comprehensive Plan. Highlights include:

- Creation of sixteen “corridor” zones to replace the old Euclidean System of regulation with its six layers of commercial zones. Instead specific corridors tailored to the Torti Gallas vision were designated as their own zoning classification with the purpose to use the zoning as a mirror of the Plan, to encourage and simplify the process. Where the vision is for mixed-use, the zoning ordinance was crafted to allow the development appropriate for that zoning classification by addressing:
  - Density
  - Height
  - Stepbacks
  - Setbacks
  - Build to lines
- The University High Density and Medium Density zones were adopted.

- Parking requirements were substantially reduced and allowances made for shared parking.
- Requirements for street trees and landscaping were added to the code.

After adoption of the revised Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Commission and Board of Architectural Review in 2003, began a revision of the Design Guidelines for Architectural Control Districts and Entrance Corridors. Those guidelines were crafted to encourage pedestrian friendly development appropriate to the character of the particular district under development.

The desire for Charlottesville to become that more urban, more dense, walkable and bikeable community was continued as the central theme of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan and the 2013 Plan, just adopted. The recent plan identified that, although much development has occurred in support of that vision, there are areas where more specific plans are needed and codes that need review/revision in order for that vision to be more fully realized. Three specific things that should be addressed are:

- The Design Standards Manual should be revised to implement the “Complete Streets” resolution adopted by City Council. In particular the manual should provide for design solutions appropriate to context by addressing lane widths, sidewalk widths, bike lane standards, planting buffer with appropriate materials, and on-street parking. It must also incorporate provisions and/or requirements for sustainable infrastructure and coordinate with ongoing revisions required for the stormwater ordinance. The Design Standards Manual should be coordinated with the ADC and EC design guidelines, and with the Zoning Ordinance (smaller driveways may be approved in historic districts) and Comprehensive Plan objectives, especially Urban Design goal 7 such as, 7:8: Coordinate with the Public Works and Parks Departments regarding maintenance and construction that would affect historic features of the City’s neighborhoods. Where possible, maintain and repair granite curbs, retaining walls, distinctive paving patterns and other features instead of replacing them.
- While the Zoning Ordinance adopted in 2003 was far reaching and unlike any other in Virginia when it was written, it is 10 years old and should be reviewed to ensure that it allows the desired development and, to the extent possible,

prohibits development that is not desired. Issues to be considered include balancing the vision for more density with the desire to preserve community character and contributing historic buildings, and addressing uses allowed to the extent that non-compatible uses are not allowed to occur adjacent to one another, or if they are located adjacent to one another to be mitigated so they may co-exist. Problems and opportunities already identified which include:

- Street Tree location
  - Building Height/Massing
  - Build to line issues
  - Discretionary Review
  - Parking Requirements and Parking Location
  - Use of the PUD
- The 2013 Comprehensive Plan identified 15 areas in need of more specific planning study. For lack of a better term they are referred to as “Small Area Plans”. Two of these planning efforts are underway and one was removed during plan adoption. Each is unique with a different understanding of desired direction and outcome or a different issue is driving each. There are themes common to most however. Concerns include:
    - Incompatible Zoning
    - Changes of property ownership and transition of uses
    - Traffic
    - Walking and Biking

## **ACTION**

There is an incredible amount of work to undertake to address these very important issues. Staff has spent a lot of time discussing how each might be addressed within existing resources and small resource increases. Using knowledge of potential development and the need to get ahead of that development, or the length of time an issue has been of concern to a neighborhood, the following is a recommended plan of action to address these needs.

1. Revise the Design Standards Manual to incorporate Complete Streets and Sustainable Infrastructure Principles. A staff team has begun this work and has established a plan to update the standards using the Institute of

Transportation Engineers Manual for Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares and the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guidelines.

2. Audit City Codes to ensure they will achieve the desired development. Using the Smart Growth America Smart Growth Policy Audit, conduct a review of city codes and policies to determine if they help us achieve our vision for smarter growth. The audit is based on the following principles:

- a) Provide a variety of transportation choices
- b) Mix land uses
- c) Create a Range of Housing Opportunity choices
- d) Create Walkable Neighborhoods
- e) Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration
- f) Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place
- g) Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective
- h) Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas
- i) Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities.
- j) Adopt Compact Building Patterns and Efficient Infrastructure Design

The tools provided with the toolkit include:

- A Quick Diagnostic
- Policy Audit
- Code and Zoning Audit
- Audit Summary
- Project Scorecard
- Incentives Matrix
- Strategy Builder

Staff will use the resources in the toolkit to audit all codes and policies. We will also engage a stakeholder group to use some of the tools to gain their perspective on the codes and policies and to ask for specific examples that will assist with the change recommendation. The stakeholders will include citizens, PLACE Design Task Force, Planning Commission and BAR members, developers, architects, and engineers. The work will be coordinated by a staff



intern and the anticipated completion date is June 30, 2014. There will be no cost to the City other than staff time and incidental meeting costs.

3. Begin the development of the Small Area Plans as identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Adopted in the Comprehensive Plan are recommendations for 14 Small Area Plans. One is nearing completion, one is about to begin, and 12 remain. These potential planning areas represent 1,595 acres of the City or 24% of the total City land area.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AREA (Acres)</b>
Woolen Mills	151.7
Martha Jefferson Area	51
High Street	151.2
River Road Area	75.2
5 <sup>th</sup> Street Extended	247.2
Fontaine Neighborhood Commercial	79.9
Cherry Roosevelt Brown	90.9
West Main Ridge McIntire Corridor	111.9
Preston Rose Hill McIntire Harris Allied	155.1
Emmet Street North of 250 Bypass	230.4
Strategic Investment Area	250.4

If plans are done, there will be an expectation for implementation. Implementation will include both regulatory and code changes as well as public infrastructure improvements. Private sector improvements will depend on market conditions and property owner willingness to take a risk on an investment. The City cannot afford to implement improvements in all these areas at one time, nor can the market absorb the private development that is the object of many of these studies and is what will ultimately fund some of the improvements.

Another factor that must be considered is the citizen interest in these planning efforts. Staff regularly hears from citizens that they have meeting fatigue, therefore planning efforts must be relevant. Prior to the initiation of additional planning studies an engagement plan should be developed and neighborhoods engaged to determine interest in more process.

As stated above, the twelve proposed Small Area Plans take several forms. Including the Strategic Investment Area and West Main Street projects which are in process, staff believes that six should involve consultant team efforts due to the complexity. The remaining six could be completed by staff teams as described later in this report. Below are descriptions of each of the planning processes along with a brief outline of how they might be completed. The bold portion of each Small Area Plan description is the language from the Comprehensive Plan. Staff comments follow each.

1. **Strategic Investment Area (South of Downtown):** This is an urban design and economic development study of the area south of Downtown to Elliott Avenue between Avon and Ridge Streets. The City has engaged the firm Cunningham/Quill to lead this study over the next six to eight months to conclude in November 2013.

This planning process is nearing completion; expected in November, 2013 with a presentation to City Council, Planning Commission and the PLACE Design Task Force.

2. **West Main/Ridge McIntire Corridors (JPA to Ridge and Preston to Monticello):** At the request of the PLACE Design Task Force, City Council approved issuing a request for proposals in the Spring of 2013 to secure consultant services to recommend updates to existing plans, codes and guidelines related to these two corridors. Transportation improvements will be focused on balancing the needs of pedestrians and bicycles with other vehicles. This plan will examine the different “nodes” on West Main and consider how to maximize investment in this key corridor.

Staff is currently negotiating a contract with a consultant team for the completion of this project.

3. **Preston Avenue (Ridge/McIntire to 10<sup>th</sup>):** The 2001 Comprehensive Plan suggested this area as a mixed-use corridor with a focus on high tech uses. An updated review of this area would determine uses appropriate to current conditions and opportunities as well as the need for improved urban design.

The Preston planning process should be very similar to the West Main Street scope and process. Because this corridor has not had the amount of scrutiny and prior planning efforts as West Main Street, more initial time must be spent with the community to form a vision. There will be stakeholder meetings with the key

property owners and businesses along the corridor. Staff envisions that the scope will include urban design work to include streetscape and form based coding as well as a financial analysis. Due to the unique configuration of Preston Avenue and the opportunities it provides for change this study will require extensive multi-modal transportation planning and traffic engineering expertise.

4. **Emmet Street/Hydraulic north of the 250 Bypass:** This area possesses considerable potential for new place making because of road network and traffic pattern changes, the development of the Stonefield commercial and residential development in the County, and future redevelopment of the K-Mart site and Michie Drive CRHA site. This area provides an expanded opportunity for dense, urban development at a major gateway to the City.

The Emmet/Hydraulic corridor provides some of the greatest challenges as well as opportunities. The completion of Stonefield, end of the K-Mart lease, Hillsdale Drive, and potential relocation of Kroger create a pending crisis of opportunity. This study will need a critical discussion to set a realistic vision for the area and must include the primary property owners who are the ones that will make things happen. A financial analysis will be key to any decision making. Only after those things are complete can a plan and regulating system be developed. Traffic volumes may negate the opportunity for this entire area to be a walkable pedestrian corridor but a realistic attempt to tie it together for all modes should be a focus.

5. **The River Road/Rivanna Corridor Area:** The UVA Architectural School held a charrette process to begin examining this area. New information from this effort will be evaluated and considered in the context of applicable ordinances and initiatives.

The River Road/Rivanna area is a multi-faceted area of study and by necessity must include joint city/county participation. Current uses are a mixture of park, commercial, residential, and industrial. Their uses are both integrated and segregated into linear nodes along the river and care must be taken to not raise fears in the area that this study is attempting to treat the entire area as a homogeneous whole. There are many competing interests, some that utilize the river corridor and some that turn their backs to the river. This planning effort must bring those groups together and create a vision and set of guidelines/codes that can bring the vision to reality. Of all the plans this may be the most complex and is the one in most need of an agreed upon vision. This area has been

discussed at joint meetings of the City and County Planning Commissions and is the subject of joint planning goals. To work together, a mutually agreeable process must be established.

6. **Woolen Mills:** The 2001 and 2007 Comprehensive Plans recognized planning challenges in the Woolen Mills Neighborhood that result from the adjacency of residential and industrial zoned areas. Staff proposed to the University of Virginia that the resources of the Architectural School be focused on this area to start the process. During the Fall 2012 semester, PLAC 4010, a neighborhood planning workshop, examined the neighborhood’s history and land-use and in January 2013 the full school conducted a week long design exercised focused on both sides of the Rivanna River. Staff and the Planning Commission will utilize, as appropriate, both of those efforts as points of departure to work with the neighborhood in the development of a small area plan that can address the tension between the low-density residential uses in the north of the neighborhood and the industrial uses in the south.

Woolen Mills is a complicated area. Since its beginnings as a mill village it has retained that mixture of residential and industrial uses, but not always in an appropriate manner. Many of the residents view it as a “suburban” neighborhood and desire for it remain that way. Businesses adjacent to the railroad value it as an industrial area and do not want to give up the location. Many desire to see the industrial area transition to a mixed-use area with emphasis on residential and neighborhood appropriate commercial uses. Cut-through traffic is a problem in other areas. The planning effort here will require a strong engagement effort and a creative approach to transition from commercial/industrial uses to residential.

These are the six plans where staff sees the assistance of a consultant led process as necessary. Using the experience of the SIA and West Main Street work to date, below is an estimate of timeline, deliverables and cost for each.

<b>SIA</b>	Timeline	10 months
	Cost	Approximately \$200,000
	Deliverables	Urban Design Plan Code/Guideline Recommendations

<b>West Main St.</b>	Timeline	18 months
	Cost	Phase One - \$250,000 Phase Two - \$200,000
	Deliverables	Phase One Urban Design Plan Form Based Code Design Guidelines Phase Two - Construction Documents
<b>Preston Ave.</b>	Timeline	15 months
	Cost	\$300,000 - \$400,000
	Deliverables	Urban Design Plan Traffic Study (Detailed) Code Changes Design Guidelines
<b>Emmet/Hydraulic</b>	Timeline	18 months
	Cost	\$500,000 - \$700,000
	Deliverables	Traffic Study Design Guidelines Urban Design Plan Code Changes
<b>River Road/ Rivanna Corridor</b>	Timeline	18 months
	Cost	\$350,000 - \$500,000
	Deliverables	Urban Design Plan Stormwater/Sustainability Plan Code Changes
<b>Woolen Mills</b>	Timeline	15 months
	Cost	\$150,000 - \$200,000
	Deliverables	Vision Plan Urban Design Plan Code Change

If a program to complete these plans using consultants were adopted and the plans were done consecutively with only a slight overlap, it is possible to complete them in between five and six years. This is contingent upon the appropriation of funds (estimated \$1,300,000 - \$1,800,000) and available staff to manage the projects.

As we learned from Virginia Beach, a way to achieve both economy and continuity might be to engage one consulting team to do all four of the planning studies not yet underway. This of course would be subject to a significant appropriation of funds.

The remaining six Small Area Plans could be completed by a staff team if staff receives Form Based Code Training and supplemental staff. The training is already being scheduled because staff must understand the form based coding that will be a part of the two plans underway in order to properly administer the code. Training is offered by the Form Based Code Institute in 3 levels, with the first being a FBC 101 that is online. The other two, FBC 201 and FBC 301 are offered as a two-day hands on training at various locations. We are currently talking to the Institute about bringing that training here to save costs. After training, the staff would be certified as form based code professionals and be able to write and administer codes.

This is important because several of the next six plans will require some degree of new code work and with new codes in place, there will be a need to administer projects.

As stated earlier there are six other Small Area Plans proposed in the Comprehensive Plan. These are described below:

- Cherry/Roosevelt Brown: The Transition Zone/Cherry Avenue Corridor zoning was created through a collaborative community process in 1999. Since that time changes in the neighborhood and the economy have led to thinking that the current zoning might not be appropriate for this area. Staff has held initial neighborhood meetings in this area and intends to continue a focused review on this area to consider both economic opportunity and neighborhood protection.**

This effort should examine the vision for Cherry and Roosevelt Brown and also the appropriateness of the zoning for other areas that were included in the rezoning in 1999. Staff and many in the community believe that the more residential areas off of the prime corridors should not allow the same intensity of use as those on the corridor. Also, there is a need to revisit the regulations in place to determine if they are appropriate to guide the desired development. This process must also examine the public spaces and look at all modes of transportation.

8. **Fontaine Neighborhood Commercial:** After completion of the Comprehensive Plan there will be a review of any needed changes to the zoning ordinance identified during the planning process. The appropriateness of the Fontaine Neighborhood Commercial is one area that will be studied, with the desire being to determine if commercial designations are appropriate.

The Fontaine area has been zoned as neighborhood commercial since 2003. During the Bel Rio noise discussions, it became clear that while the area shared a zoning designation with Downtown Belmont, the two areas are vastly different. Since 2003 the JPA bridge has been rebuilt, the gas station has been converted to a very popular restaurant, and a new fire station has been built on the corridor. It is time to examine the appropriateness of the zoning as well as the context sensitive design proposed for Fontaine Avenue. Pedestrian and bike mobility in the intersection also need to be addressed.

9. **Rose Hill:** The 2001 and 2007 comprehensive Plan recognized that there may be incompatible land uses and zoning in the Rose Hill Neighborhood. Vested rights issues make addressing the adjacency of residential and heavy commercial areas difficult; however a Rose Hill small area plan combined with study of Preston Avenue and the Harris/McIntire Corridor may help to resolve these issues.

The study envisioned in the 2001 and 2007 Comprehensive Plans has been narrow in focus and simply intended to address incompatible land uses and zoning. This plan may need to be expanded to address the Rose Hill Drive corridor and the various zones of intensity from Preston to Rugby.

10. **High Street/Martha Jefferson Area:** The relocation of Martha Jefferson Hospital is responsible for the new and transitional uses that are developing for both the former hospital as well as other properties in this neighborhood and differ from the vision created in previous plans. This area has been identified for study to include the Little High neighborhood and the area extended from High Street to River Road to evaluate the most appropriate urban design solutions for continued residential uses and economic development.

Some work has been done for the Martha Jefferson/Little High area through the SIA process. The worst traffic issues have been addressed and there has been some study of land use. A strategy to guide the change of use that should come with the departure of the hospital and re-use of former offices is a key

component of this effort. This project should build off of the prior planning process.

**11. McIntire/Harris/Allied: This area’s traffic pattern and volume will change with the completion of the Meadow Creek Parkway and interchange. This transportation change coupled with the recent development of restaurants, studios, start-up and other commercial endeavors warrant an updated review that addresses the effects and potential opportunities associated with this change.**

The Torti-Gallas study of 2002 envisioned this corridor as one for large home improvement goods retail and related service. That vision has not come about and in fact, the northern end of the property has seen more small local shops and offices develop. With traffic changes due to the interchange project this area should be re-examined for its potential land uses and context appropriate changes made to the street.

**12. Fifth Street Extended: The construction of the Avon/5<sup>th</sup> Connector and the resultant big box center will change traffic patterns in this area and is likely to stimulate increased commercial activity near this city/county edge. Planning and design studies for this area may identify urban design opportunities more consistent with the city’s desire for walkable, bikeable, and transit-supported development.**

In the next two years there is a good chance that major big box development will occur off of 5<sup>th</sup> Street Extended in Albemarle County. This area should see significant traffic changes as that happens. While ownership patterns will lessen the development opportunities, this area will continue to grow as a gateway into downtown and guidance should be put in place to ensure that growth is appropriate.

These are six plans where it is possible for a staff team with the appropriate staff additions to complete the projects. Similar to the consultant driven plans below is a summary with timeline, cost and deliverables.

**Cherry Roosevelt**

Timeline - 12 months  
Cost - \$25,000\*  
Deliverables  
Conceptual Plan  
Zoning Code for Cherry Roosevelt Brown  
Zoning Changes for Remainder  
Cherry/Roosevelt Brown Streetscape



<b>Fontaine Neighborhood</b>	Timeline – 6 months Cost - \$10,000
Deliverables	Zoning Code Change Urban Design Plan
<b>Rose Hill</b>	Timeline – 12 months Cost - \$10,500
Deliverables	Land Use Study Urban Design Plan for Rose Hill Zoning Change
<b>High Street/Martha Jefferson</b>	Timeline – 6 months Cost – \$7,500
Deliverables	Vision Plan Zoning
<b>McIntire/Harris/Allied</b>	Timeline – 12 months Cost - \$15,000
Deliverables	Vision Plan Zoning Urban Design Plan
<b>Fifth Street Extended</b>	Timeline – 12 months Cost - \$10,000
Deliverables	Vision Plan Urban Design Plan Design Guidelines Zoning

\*Costs associated with these in-house planning projects are to cover supplies and citizen engagement activities to include notice, meals, etc.

This process is possible with a staff team if design professional assistance is added to the staff. We envision that one or two-full time positions are necessary to support this effort along with at least two year round interns. One in urban design requires a background in either architecture or landscape architecture at a projected salary of \$60,000 - \$70,000 each. The other would be an economic analyst at essentially the same salary range. These could be long-term temporary positions to last until the

planning processes are completed. The total annual cost for these staff additions is estimated to be:

Urban Designer	$\$70,000 + \$18,000 + \text{benefits} =$	$\$88,000$
Economic Analyst	$\$70,000 + \$18,000 + \text{benefits} =$	$\$88,000$
Intern	$850 \text{ hours} \times 11.90 + \text{FICA} =$	$\$12,000$
Intern	$850 \text{ hours} \times \underline{11.90} + \text{FICA} =$	$\underline{\$12,000}$
	Total	$\$200,000$

Cost over 10 years estimated to be - \$2,000,000

If approached as a staff team there is still a cost to each of the projects. With incidental costs added, the total would exceed \$2,000,000 or an average of approximately \$333,000. This is as expensive as using a consultant team but it also provides for staff to serve on an implementation team also.

A staff team would bring Economic Development, Parks, Environmental and legal staff together with NDS as appropriate for each project. NDS Staff includes planners, engineers, traffic engineering and housing and GIS. We would envision a structure where each project would be led by an NDS Planner or Urban Designer with many serving on multiple teams. In addition to the regular roles, the responsibilities are imagined as follows:

Jim Tolbert – Overall management of each project, and coordination of consultant led projects.

Missy Creasy – Overall management of the six staff led projects.

Planners/Urban Designer – Specific project management including citizen engagement, vision plan development, Form Based Coding or zoning where needed, detailed plan development.

Using the McIntire/Harris/Allied Area as an example, a staff team for planning could be organized as follows:

Missy Creasy	Management
Design Professional	Project Vision, Design
Staff Planner	Project Vision, Code and Policy
Intern	Logistical/Assistance
Economic Development	Impact Analysis/Business Plan
Parks	Trails/Open Space

Traffic Engineer	Traffic Analysis/Planning
Bike/Ped Coordinator	Traffic Analysis/Planning
Environmental	Sustainable Infrastructure
Public Utilities	Utilities Analysis/Planning
Contracted Facilitator	Neighborhood Involvement

These teams could be fluid as scoping changes and many different employees from the various departments utilized depending on skill sets desired.

Using lessons learned from the Strategic Action Team and the Virginia Beach approach, an implementation team can be organized for each area as plans are completed. The organization will be very similar to the team used in plan development with exact membership and leadership to be fluid depending on the particular skill set needed.

A steering committee would be needed for each area to serve during the planning process. Each committee should include members of the PLACE Committee, Planning Commission and Community. As appropriate for a particular study, City Council might invite participation from other groups such as the BAR, Tree Commission, Chamber of Commerce, etc.

A process timeline that makes assumptions as to priority and uses July 1, 2014 as the beginning point for the future driven plans is below:

<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Begin</u></b>	<b><u>Complete</u></b>
SIA	2/13	11/13
West Main	9/13	2/15
Woolen Mills	7/14	10/15
Emmet Street	10/15	6/16
Preston	7/16	10/17
River Road/Rivanna	1/18	7/19
Cherry/Roosevelt Brown	7/14	9/15
High/Martha Jefferson	1/16	8/16
Rose Hill	1/17	3/18
McIntire/Harris/Allied	7/18	8/19
Fontaine	10/19	6/20
Fifth Street Extended	10/20	12/21

This is a very aggressive timeline that envisions as many as one consultant plan and one staff plan going on at any given time. Even pushing that much we believe it would realistically take ten years to complete the work. That will require overlapping work prep while another project is nearing completion. While the work could be done if the normal work load approaches what it has been for the last 18 months, we face a real possibility of staff burnout. This also assumes no other major priority like an SAT, Market District Study, or SIA arises.

The reality of this schedule is that they never work the way one wants them to do. Staff turnover, leave, and the other workload issues will cause many of the dates to slip. A goal of ten years for completion is probably more realistic, and that assumes funding is available and continues to be available. As you compare the chart above with the timelines of the various plans you will note that extra time has been built in to handle the unforeseen.

The Comprehensive Planning Process never assumed that all of these projects could be done in five years. While working on all of these plans could be exciting, our market is only so big and we will only absorb a certain amount of development. It is certainly obvious that we are experiencing an incredible amount of development, so it is difficult to argue that our codes impede growth. I can agree that our public spaces like West Main Street could be a lot better, but that is a multi-million dollar project. Improvements recommended in the SIA will probably represent tens of millions of public investment. Our fiscal reality is that there are limited dollars with many competing needs and we can't do it all. And, unfortunately, planning efforts create expectations of action, and when there is no action, frustration sets in. All of these issues need to be discussed before we take off on a massive planning effort.

The upcoming Strategic Planning process is a great time for City Council to prioritize these efforts. Using the priorities recommended by the Planning Commission, Council can determine the priority order and funding levels they are prepared to commit so there can be a complete understanding by the Council, the Commission, and community of the process and priority.

Any of these is a major effort, whether consultant led or by staff. Even the consultant led projects will require significant staff time to manage and coordinate, just as we have seen with the SIA. If any are undertaken we cannot expect staff to take on other major efforts and still accomplish their day to day work.

As mentioned at the beginning, implementation is something that must be considered before any of this is started . There will be an assumption by the impacted neighborhoods, that if we do a plan that we will follow through with the work. Zoning and code changes are comparatively easy and inexpensive. The public infrastructure recommendations that will come from some of these plans will be in the tens of millions of dollars. We already know that recommendations from the SIA will have associated costs in the tens of millions and West Main Street will probably cost five to ten million dollars. The thinking about planning efforts should also include an awareness of related long term investment costs and community expectations.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Staff is concerned that while the thought behind the need for small area plans is well intentioned, the capacity to carry out these plans is not available. Number of staff and/or budget for additional staff or consultant studies is not available to complete this ambitious project. Instead of doing nothing an alternative approach that takes more time and cost less is possible. This approach could include:

- Complete the Design Standards Manual as outlined previously
- Complete the Code Audit as outlined
- Add an Urban Design Professional to the staff.
- Using a staff team as outlined above begin a systematic process to engage the community around the Small Area Plan priorities selected and determine if the previously established vision is appropriate or if it should be adjusted.
- Based on the findings from the engagement process and results of the Design Standards Manual and Code Audit use the staff teams to recommend changes to the Zoning Ordinance or other codes as appropriate. Where needed recommend changes to the public spaces and develop plans for infrastructure improvements.

The same staff teams discussed earlier can also coordinate implementation. Resources needed to implement infrastructure improvements are scarce and competition with other needs is fierce. Public investment should be strategic and

targeted to those places most likely to make a difference. While codes can be adjusted to prepare for development opportunities, public resources should be strategically invested in those areas where the investment directly supports jobs and development.

### **SUMMARY/CONCLUSION**

The recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan include a lot of very important work and can guide the planning work of the City for many years. This is important but must be balanced with all other community needs.