

## Chapter Thirteen: Issues, Goals and Objectives

This chapter will address the community's issues, which provide the basis for implementation decisions. Goals and policies will be enumerated for each of the planning elements that were outlined in the inventory and assessment chapter of the plan. Before beginning the discussion of goals and policies however, it is necessary to first examine key planning issues and findings that resulted from a review of the inventory and assessment of existing conditions and that arose out of the many meetings conducted over the planning period with the community. This section will state the issue, then outline goals and objectives that address the issue(s). As appropriate, the goals and objectives will be keyed to implementation items. It is important to understand that this plan has a 25 year planning horizon. Not all issues raised or goals and objectives stated here will be addressed within the next five years. Goals and objectives are policy statements to guide implementation steps that follow the development of issues in the planning process. Goals are broad policy statements while objectives are more specific statements that get to the actions that will be necessary to achieve the goals.

### KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS

#### LAND USE

**Land Use Map:** In some cases, the zoning ordinance does not match the Land Use Maps. Often proposed land use maps show land uses that are expected or desired in the future. Quite often these land use projections are made in advance of zoning changes to reflect the land use recommendations. However, in Charlottesville, there are cases where the zoning on the zoning map shows a use that is not compatible with or is either diametrically opposed to the use shown on the Land Use Map. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Communication Tower:** As technology has changed through the past years, communication towers have proliferated across the country. Unregulated, they have become community eyesores that detract from the quality of life in the community. **Source: Staff**

**Historic Preservation:** Charlottesville is a community blessed with extraordinary historic resources. As development pressures increases the pressure on historic districts for redevelopment will also grow. Historic preservation laws and processes must be sensitive to the character that has made Charlottesville the place that it is. History should be preserved and celebrated. New development must be sensitive to the development that has preceded it through the years. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Park Land Zoning:** Concerns have been voiced about the protection of designated park land within the community. Most of the park land is zoned R-1 or some other developable zoning designation. Concerned neighborhoods desire that we create a zoning classification that will allow no use other than open space or park. Designating a property as park land may create a false expectation on the part of the citizens that it can never be changed because it may still be rezoned by City Council and sold. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**University Housing:** The impacts of the University on neighborhoods are apparent to all that have been involved in this planning process. It is apparent that the University will only house 30% to 35% of its students on grounds in the future. It is becoming apparent also that students desire to live off grounds and in areas nearby the grounds and activities on the Corner. The neighborhoods are suffering because as more and more students desire to live in close proximity to the grounds, homes are being converted. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Parking near UVA:** A major impact on neighborhoods surrounding the University is parking associated with the University and particularly the Health Sciences Center. The University has not provided the amount of parking that is necessary to support development on grounds or has not created the incentive to use those spaces available and as a result, students, faculty and employees are parking on streets in neighborhoods adjacent to the University and impacting the residents in a very negative way. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Transit Corridors:** To increase the use of transit throughout the City and to make it a more viable transportation alternative, higher density of population will be necessary in the areas surrounding transit corridors. **Source: Planning Commission**

**Home Offices:** With an increasing service based economy that allows more and more of our business activities and transactions to occur from our home, there is a greater opportunity for businesses to be conducted within the home. There may be an opportunity to relax the home office requirements to better enable our citizens to conduct businesses from their homes while protecting against negative impacts. **Source: Staff**

**Non-Conforming Lots:** There are small vacant lots scattered throughout the community. Many of these have been deemed unbuildable in the past because of their size. Currently, the minimum lot size for construction of a single family home is 6,000 square feet. To create opportunities for the construction of new houses and to utilize vacant properties, the zoning ordinance could be amended to allow single family homes to be constructed on pre-existing lots of record that are smaller than 6,000 square feet. Current provisions allow this to happen to some degree, but they are not adequate to insure that all appropriate lots can be developed. **Source: Planning Commission**

**Downtown Residential Parking:** The Housing Strategy identified the need to create more opportunities for housing in the downtown area. The Corridor Study confirmed that significant demand in the Downtown area. However, one negative to living downtown is parking. There is a need for parking both for downtown residents and for their guests, and for access to parking after regular business hours. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Conversion of Owner Units to Rental:** The Housing Strategy, identified the conversion of owner occupied units to rental units and the declining percentage of owner occupied properties in the community as a major concern. There has been a great deal of discussion about how we impact this trend and turn it around to our betterment, including the City becoming actively involved by providing downpayment assistance, by providing tax breaks, and even through assisting in the construction of infrastructure to serve new developments that would in turn lower development costs and reduce the price of housing. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Goal:** Create a zoning ordinance that incorporates newer forms of mixed-use type of development desired by the community.

**Objectives:**

- Develop a new zoning ordinance with alternatives that are modeled after the current transition zone and incorporate the urban design guidelines recommended by this plan
- Create a zoning classification where differences between zones are based on intensity of use as defined by density, height and maximum size of allowable use and not on type of use alone.
- Create a zoning classification to allow mom and pop style small neighborhood businesses to flourish.
- When developing alternative ordinances always respect and protect adjacent residential areas

**Goal:** Regulate the use of land to assure the protection, preservation and wise use of the City's natural, historic and architecturally significant environment.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to monitor development through enforcement of site plan/subdivision review, zoning, soil erosion ordinances and a better system of bonding performance, to ensure protection of limited natural resources and sensitive environmental areas, including designated flood plain areas and rivers.
- Encourage the use of Planned Unit Development as a way to protect the natural environment and allow flexibility and variety in development.
- Ensure compatibility of land use in all decisions affecting land use, and update the Land Use Plan on a City-wide basis with current land use data. Pay special attention to residential neighborhood protection, affordable housing, and coordination with Albemarle County and the University of Virginia.

**Goal:** Promote land use that maintains and enhances the City's role as a regional market place, without sacrificing the quality of life and environment.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to develop CSX property based on the master plan with revisions if needed. This development needs to be supportive of Downtown and compatible with the Market Street and Belmont neighborhoods, as well as the east end of the Downtown Mall.
- Seek to identify additional land for light industrial use with sufficient buffering to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage the use of Planned Unit Development as a way to protect the natural environment and allow flexibility and variety in development.

**Goal:** Revise the zoning ordinance and zoning map to provide a consistent and up to date zoning code for the City.

**Objectives:**

- Amend the zoning map to implement the many changes recommended by the neighborhoods to make zoning and existing land use and the land use plan consistent.
- Amend the zoning ordinance to provide for regulation of communication towers.
- Amend the zoning ordinance in such a way that is sensitive to the history of the community and provides for protection of valuable historic resources.
- Provide protection for parkland from unwanted development.
- Explore the addition of the Rugby and Corner Historic Districts and the boundaries of the Downtown District and determine if a district is feasible in the Martha Jefferson Area.
- Provide a new zoning ordinance that is creative while at the same time consistent with Commonwealth of Virginia Enabling Legislation and that allows for the implementation of desired land use changes throughout the community.
- Adopt the zoning ordinance that is design sensitive and that contains the Urban Design Criteria recommended in the Plan.
- Review the historic preservation section of the ordinance to examine the current standards for demolition and for the preservation of archaeological resources.

**Goal:** Seek to increase the number of rehabilitated and re-used historic structures.

**Objectives:**

- Actively encourage developers to use rehabilitation tax credits as appropriate for the rehabilitation of historic properties
- Utilize provisions available in Virginia for real estate tax abatement for the rehab of older buildings not registered as historic like the residential tax abatement program.

**Goal:** Provide necessary code and policy changes to take pressure off of neighborhoods adjacent to the University of Virginia.

**Objectives:**

- Study Provide University precincts that are areas with special zoning requirements that allow increased densities in those areas that are already mostly high density and student rental while at the same time reducing density allowances in primarily low density neighborhoods.
- Work with the University to require that second year as well as first year students not be allowed to bring cars to the community.
- Review the noise ordinance to ensure that it is the best possible to protect the quality of life for neighborhoods adjacent to the concentration of University students.
- Revise the permit parking standards to provide for permit parking in neighborhoods adjacent to the University to eliminate University employees and students from parking in predominantly residential neighborhoods.

**Goal:** Provide consistent parking standards that are supportive of neighborhood goals and that enhance neighborhood goals and objectives.

**Objectives:**

- Provide a mechanism for parking for new downtown residential uses and to provide for parking for existing downtown residential uses that have been developed without parking.
- Protect neighborhoods from encroachment by employees of commercial enterprise and particularly the University of Virginia.
- Eliminate the parking free zones in the West Main Street and Downtown areas as recommended by the parking study.
- Provide for public/private partnerships to provide parking in publicly owned facilities

**TRANSPORTATION**

**U. S. 29 Congestion:** US Route 29 is a commercial corridor, has become quite congested and does not provide an appropriate means of access into the City of Charlottesville. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Livable Streets:** Charlottesville began to develop as a community over 200 years ago and it is blessed with many narrow streets and rights-of-ways with small front yard, front porches and street trees and sidewalks. However, because it developed many years ago before the automobile and before proliferation of regulatory signs and utility poles, many of its sidewalks and streets are quite congested. There is very little room for the automobile, bicyclist and pedestrians. There are issues associated with maximizing the potential of the City's livable streets because of the obstructions in streets and sidewalks and their limited width. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Walkability:** While there are many neighborhoods that have sidewalks and quiet streets, there are others that are developed in town without an appropriate network of sidewalks. Walkability is important if this City is to remove traffic from the street and provide the quality of life desired by its residents. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Bicycle Racks/Lockers:** An increasing number of Charlottesville residents ride their bicycles to work and to shop. Yet there are very few business locations or public locations with bicycle racks. Limited outdoor racks and bicycle lockers in the community impact the ability of the City to capture more commuter trips by bicycle.

**Source: Staff**

**Traffic Calming:** Many of the streets in Charlottesville do not carry high volume traffic, but they carry traffic that travels too fast upsetting the quiet residential character of the neighborhood. Appropriate traffic calming that does not relocate unwanted cars to other streets, but that reduces the speed and increases safety is appropriate for many Charlottesville neighborhoods. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Regional Transportation:** Transportation in Charlottesville should be discussed in relationship with the regional picture of transportation. Development is occurring in Albemarle and surrounding counties at a much greater rate than in Charlottesville. Many of the roads in the region pass through Charlottesville, and because Charlottesville continues to serve as an employment and retail center for the region, those trips will continue to impact the traffic situation within the City. **Source: Staff**

**Connector Roads:** The City of Charlottesville cannot build itself out of the approaching transportation problems. The projected increases in traffic will occur and will further congest streets and cause significant delays at intersections. No roads that are proposed, will reduce the future congestion to an acceptable level. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Traffic Reduction:** Traffic reduction measures also will not be sufficient to reduce the level of the congestion that will occur with future growth and development. The most successful cities in the country have reduced total trips by less than 10% with alternative transportation strategies. Even if Charlottesville is as successful as those cities, traffic will still reach unacceptable levels without regional solutions to transportation issues. The City must determine its goal for traffic reduction and take aggressive measures to achieve that goal, but at the same time, it must look to other strategies to reduce current and future traffic congestion. **Source: Staff**

**Light Rail:** The potential for light rail or dedicated bus lanes to serve the City, Route 29 Corridor and possibly the Route 250 West Corridor, has been raised as a possible solution to the long-term transportation picture. However, densities appear to not be great enough at this point to support a system in the community. If light rail or dedicated bus lanes are to become alternatives at any point in the future, a feasibility study should be started immediately if they are deemed a possible transportation alternative, the City should begin to work with the surrounding counties to identify and preserve corridors that can be used for light rail. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Increased Transit Use:** Transit has been discussed as the significant alternative to reduce the number of vehicles on the streets of Charlottesville. There is an opportunity to reduce the number of commuter trips through greater use of transit. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Bicycle Network:** A great desire has been expressed by members of the community for an increased ability to bicycle to work and for pleasure. Because of the existing narrow streets, and because the addition of bike lanes has not been a priority for the City in the past, the bicycle network has not been expanded to a great extent over the past several years. There is an opportunity to take advantage of railroad rights-of-way, low lying creek areas and the wider streets to develop a network of bicycle lanes and greenways to provide increased access and better connectivity throughout the community. **Source: Staff**

**Employee Commuter:** One significant factor that impacts traffic in the community is the large number of employees who work in City businesses, but who commute from Albemarle and surrounding counties into the City on a daily basis. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Goal:** Reduce the number of single occupancy automobile trips made daily into and through the City of Charlottesville. Work to achieve a reduction in the number of vehicular trips to a level where 10% of the trips taken by all traffic are in some form other than the automobile.

#### **Objectives:**

- Provide increased transit service so that transit becomes a preferred alternative to the automobile.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities to encourage their use.
- Charge market price for parking.
- Work with employees to create incentives and opportunities for carpooling.
- Utilize shuttle services and park-and-ride lots to reduce trips into Charlottesville.
- Reduce parking charge for rideshare vehicles.
- Look for opportunities to increase connectivity of existing areas by extension of internal roadways such as Milmont Street from Arlington to Copeley.

**Goal:** Increase bicycle usage as an alternative form of transportation

#### **Objectives:**

- Complete a Greenway Master Plan to provide an interconnected system of bicycle routes throughout the City.
- Complete the current Bicycle Plan by providing bicycle lanes on all streets identified as appropriate.
- Revisit the current Bicycle Plan and revise as appropriate.
- Provide bicycle lockers and shower facilities at public locations, particularly parking garages, and provide bicycle racks at public locations.
- Revise the Zoning Ordinance to encourage bicycle racks and bike lockers at new businesses and apartment complexes and to provide incentives for greater density of development if such additional facilities are provided.

**Goal:** Create more livable streets in Charlottesville

#### **Objectives:**

- Adopt the new Traffic Calming Study.

- Implement Traffic Calming on neighborhood streets as appropriate.
- Improve interconnected system of sidewalks throughout the community.
- Remove obstructions from sidewalks as identified in the accessibility index.
- Study narrow residential streets in neighborhoods such as 10th and Page to determine if traffic calming or one-way pairs might lead to increased safety.

**Goal:** Complete projects contained in the Six-Year Transportation Plan

**Objectives:**

- Complete the Fontaine Avenue construction project.
- Revise the Ivy Road concept plan as recommended in the Corridor Study and construct.
- Construct the six traffic signal locations as contained in the Six-Year Plan.
- Coordinate the traffic signals on Emmet Street.

**Goal:** Improve the flow of traffic on U.S. Route 29 and Emmet Street while protecting the integrity of the businesses along the Corridor.

**Objectives:**

- Explore options for the redesign of Hydraulic/29 Intersection to improve the flow of traffic while not damaging adjacent businesses.
- Study the feasibility of extending Hillsdale Drive to Hydraulic Road and if feasible, construct.
- Coordinate traffic signals along Emmet and U. S. Route 29 from University Avenue through Rio Road.

**Goal:** Create more demand for transit along transit corridors.

**Objectives:**

- Review the zoning ordinance and increase densities as appropriate along the corridors, including the downtown mall to increase demand for transit service.

**Goal:** Explore the feasibility of light rail as an alternative form of transportation

**Objectives:**

- Conduct a light rail feasibility study in cooperation with Albemarle and surrounding counties.
- If recommended, implement policies to preserve and obtain future transit and light rail corridors.

**Goal:** Become a more active player in regional transportation decisions to work towards removing traffic that originates outside of Charlottesville through the core of Charlottesville.

**Objectives:**

- Work with Albemarle County to construct roads that provide a variety of ways to move through the community and which discourages traffic that moves throughout the City simply as a convenience.
- Work with Albemarle and surrounding counties to study alternative mode options and implement them as appropriate (such as the Eastern Planning Initiative).

## **PARKING**

**Parking Free Zone:** Parking is an issue in Downtown Charlottesville West Main Street, the Court Square Area, and in other parts of the community. The Parking Study that has been undertaken by the City has many recommendations in it regarding parking standards. **Source: Parking Study**

**Parking Deficiency:** The parking study identified a deficiency of parking spaces to serve the businesses in the Downtown, Court Square, and West Main Street areas. **Source: Parking Study**

**Parking Alternatives:** While the parking study identified a lack of available parking to support business use in the Downtown, Court Square, and West Main Street areas, it pointed out that there are obstacles to constructing enough parking to meet the need. **Source: Parking Study**

**Parking Provided by Developer:** The parking study observed that while it may be desirable for the developer to provide the parking to support proposed development, the cost associated with parking construction may eliminate the financial viability of a project. **Source: Parking Study**

**Permit Parking:** Many residential areas around downtown and the University of Virginia have problems arising from parking encroachment by businesses in those areas. Residents have difficulty parking in front of their homes and at times cannot get access to their own properties. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Goal:** Create more public parking around the Downtown Mall area

**Objectives:**

- Implement projects to provide additional parking according to the City Council adopted parking strategies.

**Goal:** Develop alternative strategies for reducing the parking demand

**Objectives:**

- Develop a satellite parking system where long term parkers in high demand areas could park at distant locations and be shuttled to their job sites.
- Increase the use of transit in and other alternative modes to get employees to work
- Develop a permit parking system to maximize the efficiency of available spaces.

**Goal:** Develop parking requirements that provide for increased flexibility to allow a variety of development scenarios.

**Objectives:**

- Provide a system of payment in lieu of parking, in which developers will pay a set amount per space not provided on site. This money would be allocated to a capital improvement program line item which would be used to construct additional spaces throughout the City.
- Provide tax credits for the construction of more parking than is required and if it is made available for public use.
- Allow shared parking among multiple uses and users.
- Where appropriate, reduce the parking requirements currently called for by the ordinance.

**Goal:** Explore the creation of a parking authority.

**Objectives:**

- Explore a parking authority whose purpose is to develop and manage parking with a goal that it becomes self-funding using fees from parking garages and meters to operate the authority.

**Goal:** Provide for parking system improvements consistent with the recommendations of the parking study.

**Objectives:**

- Implement a short run downtown shuttle system.
- Increase overtime parking fines to \$10 now and \$15 in four years.
- Decrease on-street time limit duration to ninety minutes.

- Increase loading zone enforcement.
- Develop a new signage package to provide better direction to parking facilities.
- Restripe on street parking stalls to achieve maximum efficiency.
- Develop new parking in suitable areas to reduce the deficiency currently in Downtown and West Main Street area parking.

## HOUSING

**Rental Housing:** Demographics for Charlottesville show that there is an alarming trend of conversion of home ownership properties to renter properties. While some of the numbers that indicate this change are reflective of the construction of new student housing and not conversion of owner occupied housing to renter housing, the trend in Charlottesville is for the conversion of homeownership properties to renter properties. This is a disturbing trend because of its impact on the stability of our neighborhoods. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Out Migration:** Over the past few years, Charlottesville has experienced an out migration of homeowners to Albemarle and surrounding counties. Reasons for this could include, the cost of housing, the perceived quality of schools, taxes, or a desire to be in a more rural setting. Whatever the reasons, this issue must be addressed and appropriate solutions developed to encourage homeowners to remain in the community. It is imperative that the City maintains a balanced and diverse population in order to maintain its place as a high quality community in which to live. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Aging Housing Stock:** Charlottesville has an aging housing stock. Most housing in the community was built prior to 1970 and much was constructed much earlier than that. As the housing stock ages, it must be updated if the community is to continue to attract new homeowners to the City. There must be adequate programs in place for those who cannot afford to maintain their homes on their own, and there should be incentives provided to encourage reinvestment in homes rather than relocating to other parts of the region. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Accessory Housing:** As our population changes and grows older, there is an increasing need across the country for extended families to live together so that children might care for their aging parents. One way that this is being addressed in communities is through the addition of mother-in-law apartments or detached cottages for parents to be located on lots in single family neighborhoods. As a University community, caution must be exercised to avoid unintended conversions to student housing. **Source: Staff**

**Housing Rehabilitation:** In recent years, CDBG funds have been effectively leveraged toward the improvement of housing stock and housing opportunities. The recent approach dedicating a larger percentage of funding for owner-occupied rehab and less for infrastructure improvement should continue. Housing rehabilitation is still a vital need for our lower income homeowners as well as for middle income homeowners. **Source: Housing Strategy**

**Rental Certificates of Occupancy:** Several of our neighborhoods and attendees at the Quality Community Council have suggested that housing code enforcement could be delivered in a better way. They are concerned that housing, particularly renter housing, changes occupancy without any inspection and without anyone checking to see that certain minimum codes are met. There is no doubt that this is a problem, because it has not been the policy of the City to require an inspection before reoccupancy. There are also logistical problems with putting together a program to assure that there could be inspection prior to reoccupancy especially in the area of staffing. The University of Virginia student council president has also requested that the City consider a program to require inspection of all renter units prior to reoccupancy to insure that each unit meets the code requirements. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Rental Rehabilitation:** While we continue to focus effort on homeownership and on rehabilitation of homeowner properties, a large percentage of properties in the City are renter occupied. Currently, we have no programs for assistance or incentives for the rehabilitation of rental properties. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Housing Unit Diversity:** While a goal of our community is increased homeownership, there is also a definite need for rental housing. To prevent all rental housing from becoming student housing, there should be a mixture



of units and a requirement that amenities be provided that are appropriate for families. **Source: Planning Commission**

**Affordable, Accessible Housing:** There is a need in the community for affordable housing that is accessible to disabled and low income residents of the community.

**Goal:** Create additional housing opportunities for homeowners in the community.

**Objectives:**

- Identify incentives for the provision of downtown housing.
- Reduce lot size requirements to allow development of the many vacant lots throughout the community.
- Provide incentives to homeowners to encourage them to remain in the City of Charlottesville.
- Investigate the use of the federal programs to increase homeownership opportunities.
- Explore the teacher next door/officer next door financing program.

**Goal:** Assist renters in their efforts to live in quality housing within the community.

**Objectives:**

- Institute a rental rehab program to assist landlords in rehabilitating rental properties to standards that provide for adequate living for their tenants.
- Provide standards that allow for accessory apartments (mother-law apartments) in all residential areas.
- Provide incentives to encourage developers to provide a mixture of rental housing types that would encourage rental units for all renters.
- Amend the codes to provide a pre-occupancy inspection for rental properties to insure code compliance.
- Develop a system to encourage developers to provide handicapped accessible housing throughout the community.

**Goal:** Improve the housing stock throughout the community.

**Objectives:**

- Provide a housing rehabilitation program that is targeted toward non-CDBG eligible homeowners.
- Encourage City involvement to reduce development cost to encourage the provision of affordable and middle income housing.
- Provide zoning revisions to eliminate lot size nonconformity's that inhibit the expansion of owner occupied properties.
- Explore methods to reduce gentrification resulting from redevelopment.

## **CODE ENFORCEMENT**

**Trash:** Many of the neighborhoods have identified trash as an issue in their neighborhoods. Anecdotal information suggests that the trash problem worsened when the City went to its current method of trash collection in an effort to encourage recycling. An offshoot of this approach might have been increased accumulation of trash around residential properties and in public rights-of-way. There is no systematic method of involving the community in trash removal, therefore, too often trash is accumulated to the point that it detracts from the neighborhoods.

**Source: Neighborhoods**

**Neighborhood Conservation:** Many residents have expressed a desire to protect neighborhoods from encroachment by commercial and university expansion. There is a sense that the residential character of some neighborhoods is eroding.

**Goal:** Promote the conservation of quality neighborhoods throughout the community.

**Objectives:**

- Adopt zoning that promotes neo-traditional neighborhood styles that encourage neighborhood living and a sense of community.
- Continue the neighborhood planner relationship with the various neighborhoods.
- Review all codes to ensure that those that have been adopted are the most effective and efficient for insuring the maintenance of quality neighborhoods.
- Review the current trash sticker program to ensure that it is providing the proper incentives for all persons to recycle and not creating excessive trash in our neighborhoods.
- Have code enforcement personnel work with neighborhood associations to educate them on proper mosquito and rodent control techniques to improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods.

**OPEN SPACE/RECREATION**

**Greenspace:** One reason for Charlottesville's high rating as a quality place to live and work is the amount of greenspace, recreation and urban forest that it contains. The City should strive in the future to maintain and increase the amount of greenspace, and the number and quality of street trees throughout the community.

**Source:** Staff

**Recreation:** Many residents expressed a concern that the City continue to be known as one that is supportive of its parks and recreation. As growth has occurred in surrounding areas, pressure has increased on available facilities. **Source:** Parks Advisory Board

**Recreation Facilities:** Recent studies have shown a deficiency in certain types of recreation facilities. These studies also indicate a large number of users of the facilities that reside outside of the City of Charlottesville.

**Source:** Athletic Study

**Goal:** Establish and preserve an appropriate open space system to protect public health, safety and welfare, and assure retention of aesthetic and environmental amenities.

**Objectives:**

- The City's provision of public open spaces shall be consistent with the Goals, Objectives and Policies of related Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Discourage development, within or adjacent to unique natural areas, where such activity will have significant detrimental effects.
- The Parks Division should provide 50 trees and plant material to preserve and augment the community's supply of trees and other plant material on an annual basis.
- The Parks Division shall maintain its "Street Tree Inventory" to serve as a valuable management tool in retaining optimum tree cover in Charlottesville.
- By 2004, the Parks Division shall utilize the Street Tree Inventory to develop a Street Tree Master Plan for the entire community.
- Continue to promote the City's Tree and Landscape Ordinance as a key element in retention and provision of private plant materials.
- Public/ private beautification efforts on public property shall continue, but only when Parks Division resources are adequate to maintain the additional inventory.
- The Parks Division will provide landscape areas along right of ways and park areas.
- The Parks Division will continue to increase landscape areas as long as there are resources adequate to maintain additional inventory.

**Goal:** Provide a high quality, quantity, and variety of recreational facilities and activities throughout the City for the enjoyment and development of all residents, making full use of all existing recreational facilities, working to preserve, enhance, and maintain certain natural features, historic qualities, and natural terrain in the City's parks and open spaces, while ensuring providing access to parks and recreational activities for all City residents.

**Objectives:**

- The master plan for the next phase of McIntire Park should be reviewed and finalized. Once the alignment and design for the Meadowcreek Parkway is decided upon, the park land should be developed in accordance with the master plan.
- Youth programs especially for teenagers, should be given primary emphasis with coordination of different programs to meet the needs of youth.
- The City should continue to make efforts to provide additional access to the Rivanna River, Meadowcreek and Moore's Creek in the form of trails, improvement of beaches, and other open spaces on the river. A pedestrian bike bridge should be constructed to link Darden Towe Park with Pen Park. When making these improvements, the City should strive to strike a balance between environmental protection and improved accessibility. The trails adjacent to the river and streams should be accessible to the disabled.
- The City should continue to recognize the positive impact of landscaped areas, flower displays, and green space on the quality of life through a continued emphasis on maintenance of these areas. The City should continue to replant street trees and should adopt a tree policy with policy areas of attention. Additionally, the City should place an emphasis on improving the landscaping of entrance corridors.

**Goal:** Provide adequate land in an equitably distributed manner to meet public recreation needs.

**Objectives:**

- Provide parkland and open space to meet the level of service standards.
- Provide neighborhood parks and regional parkland to meet public needs.
- Special and indoor facilities should continue to be provided by the City of Charlottesville to meet public needs.
- No parkland should be diverted to other uses except in instances of overriding public interest, in which case it shall be effectively replaced.
- In order to ensure that the allocation of parklands are equitably distributed, the City of Charlottesville shall give high priority in developing its park system based on a service radius calculation (e.g., Neighborhood = 1 mile, Major = 3 miles, and Regional = 30 minutes driving time).
- Improve coordination efforts with all levels of government, non-profit providers and private sector landholders so as to increase publicly available recreation lands by the year 2005.
- The Planning Department should maintain a computerized inventory of public recreation lands.
- The City shall continue to pursue multiple-use opportunities on City-owned lands and use the results to provide for future neighborhood recreation needs.
- Maintain and/or improve the existing recreation lands and encourage the dedication of properties for recreation uses through appropriate incentives.
- Coordinate with the School Board to provide park usage on school sites, where feasible.
- Examine the feasibility of utilizing former school sites for potential park use.

**Goal:** Provide and maintain diverse parks, facilities and activities of high quality for all residents.

**Objectives:**

- The City should complete a Needs Assessment and Master Plan for all City Park and Recreation sites.
- Continue and expand the use of cooperative agreements with public and private schools, surrounding jurisdictions, non-profit agencies, churches and the private sector to assure facilities for active indoor year-round.
- The City of Charlottesville's Parks Division shall hold a biennial workshop, which will provide for neighborhood participation and input into the provision of neighborhood recreational needs. Results of these workshops shall be incorporated into programs designed for neighborhood parks.
- Provide improvement of all existing parks and recreation sites in accordance with the Master Plan by 2010 as funds are available.
- Continue use of the Master Plan in order to equitably correct existing facility deficiencies.

- Allocate sufficient funds to adequately supervise and maintain existing parks and recreational facilities in order to protect the public investment.
- Reassess the ability of existing sites and facilities to meet the changing needs of the population to be served at least every five years.
- Give high priority to public safety at park and recreation sites.
- The City will attempt to make 100% of all recreational sites accessible by 2010.
- Coordinate present and future recreation sites with existing and planned transportation systems (including transit-routes).
- Provide for bicycle and pedestrian access to parks and recreational facilities, especially in the case of neighborhood - serving sites.
- Include accessibility for all (elderly, handicapped, and economically disadvantaged others with special mobility needs) as a design criteria for new facilities and "retrofit" all existing sites by 2010.
- Coordinate the implementation of the Athletic Field study on an equitable basis with the County. Upgrade present athletic fields and have at least two class "A" fields that each sport can use.
- Investigate all existing City owned and funded fields for the possible lighting of these fields, to extend their usage, after extensive neighborhood input.
- Assess the ability of existing sites and expand the use of cooperative agreements with public and private schools, surrounding jurisdictions, non-profit agencies, churches, and the private sector to determine the availability of sites for athletic fields.
- The City and Albemarle County should explore a joint agreement on the maintenance and upgrading of athletic fields.
- Continue and expand efforts to assure public awareness of park and recreational programs and facilities throughout the life of the Plan.
- Develop an annual event calendar with the dual aim of enhancing citizen awareness of planned events and identifying sponsorship opportunities.
- Conduct a regular "User Preference and Assessment Survey" to obtain feedback on programs offered and identify unmet resident and visitor demand.
- Finish Towe Park

**Goal:** Develop new funding sources for expansion of Parks and Recreation facilities and make use of all available funding sources in the provision of quality recreation and open space opportunities.

### **Objectives:**

- Apply annually for at least two non-City funding sources, including fees and charges, to augment existing General Fund sources through 2010.
- Continue use of the State of Virginia Assistance Programs, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and other potential sources of grant funding.
- Upon renewal of concession arrangements managed by the Parks Division and Recreation
- Departments investigate ways to increase revenue yield and heighten public use and enjoyment of such services. The departments shall continue to maintain control over all concession contracts for which they are responsible.
- Utilize appropriate, innovative techniques in use elsewhere in Virginia and throughout the country to enhance leisure service delivery.
- Efficiencies in departmental operations and maintenance are recognized as a vital element in extending service availability, and will be incorporated wherever feasible.
- Assist the City of Charlottesville Chamber of Commerce and the Visitor and Convention Bureau in promoting recreation activities and facilities to our visitors and residents by providing maps, brochures and up-to-date information as needed.
- Open Space recreational areas shall be used as incentives for redevelopment in deteriorating or underutilized areas of the City by giving priority to projects in eligible Community Development Block Grant Program Areas.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Workforce Development:** While Charlottesville has one of the lowest employment rates in the entire nation, the workforce should be trained for better and higher paying jobs both for workers to expand their life style and enjoy the things that are great about Charlottesville, and for Charlottesville to continue to attract the quality businesses necessary to provide those jobs to its citizens. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Tax Base Erosion:** Charlottesville is a landlocked community with limited room for new development. However, for any community to be successful, it must continue to expand its economic base in order to provide jobs and opportunities for its citizens. Albemarle County can continue to develop a retail base, reducing pieces of the retail base from Charlottesville. The City must aggressively pursue the appropriate expansion of its retail and other commercial base so that services can be provided, jobs are provided, and that the quality of life that Charlottesville is accustomed to, can be maintained. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Land Costs:** Due primarily to a limited supply of sizable sites in quality locations, land costs can be appreciably higher in downtown locations than in greenfield locations. In the City of Charlottesville, the assessed value of land per acre is much higher than in the suburban counties, particularly in the corridors facing greater development pressure. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Site Assembly:** The price per acre of land is only one cost factor for vacant land. Infill developers often must acquire several individually controlled, small sites in order to assemble a site large enough to build upon. This can add to the cost, as well as the time it takes to assemble the site. **Source: Corridor Study**

**City Development Costs:** Preparing a site in a dense, in-town location can significantly increase costs, especially if the site requires the demolition of an existing structure. The potential for environmental contamination, and the necessity of very expensive remediation if contamination is found, makes some sites in in-town locations wholly unacceptable to the private market. Significant redevelopment in the corridors will require the clearing of sites with existing improvements, as the supply of truly vacant land is limited. This site clearance will significantly increase the development costs for developments within the City. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Parking Costs:** An obstacle presented by the parking requirement is twofold: first, parking requirements can add greater costs to developments in denser locations than in lower density locations; and second, the lack of parking can limit the ability of a development to attract demand. With regards to cost, structured (\$12,000 per space) or underground (\$20,000 to \$25,000 per space) parking is much more costly than surface parking (\$2,000 per space), and this more expensive parking will be required on many sites in the corridors within Charlottesville. Many potential developments may not be financially viable if they have to absorb these parking costs. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Development Capital:** Appropriate and effective financing avenues for infill development need to be identified. Charlottesville has yet to attract significant, financing from outside of the region for an unusual or creative new development. However, nationally, the financing landscape is beginning to change, as more creative, mixed-use developments have proven to be successful. The lack of capital is a strong impediment to smaller-scale projects in infill locations. Currently, in Charlottesville, many projects are financed with developer money up front, with external financing obtained later. Apparently, local financial institutions are not able and/or willing to finance larger development projects. This developer formula imposes much greater risks on the development, and limits the number of developers willing to undertake projects in the City. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Traffic Congestion:** While increased traffic congestion is certainly a regional problem, an overtaxed system within the City of Charlottesville has been identified as a key obstacle to attracting more businesses and shoppers. This creates a higher level of risk for developers, who are concerned that traffic congestion may limit the ability to attract a market. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Development Review Process:** Improving approval and review processes will assist developers and their architects in designing their proposals, while providing a more consistent standard for judgement by the BAR. In cities throughout the country, infill developers often must face a particularly time-consuming approval process, especially considering that neighborhood resistance to new development is often more organized in the city than in suburban locations. Some developers have mentioned that the review process, especially architectural reviews,

in the City of Charlottesville is overly cumbersome. In fact, the review process is not overly burdensome, but the architectural standards are limited in terms of both stringency of requirements and geographic scope. The development process for projects requiring the approval of the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) is somewhat inconsistent and unclear. It is often deemed as excessively subjective. This situation is perhaps more perceived than real, but developers are unlikely to spend time and effort up front if the development process is believed to be unpredictable. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Mixed-Use Ordinance:** The creation of a mixed-use, pedestrian oriented community requires complimentary zoning regulations. Not only should they allow the appropriate mix, but also they should specify the urban design regulations that will achieve the degree of human scale and spatial enclosure that makes streets feel like great places to inhabit. The Transition Zone (TZ) which applies to Cherry Avenue, the 9th/10th Collector and the northern edge of Fifeville bordering the CSX tracks is a model of such an ordinance. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Neighborhood Isolation:** The concentration of poverty in city neighborhoods around the nation has had disastrous effects, resulting in physical, economic and social isolation of the low-income communities from more mixed-income neighborhoods. A number of neighborhoods with high concentrations of low-income residents are adjacent to a number of the prominent corridors in the City, including the Downtown Mall, West Main, Preston Avenue, and Monticello Avenue. These neighborhoods are isolated physically, economically and socially from other portions of the City, which inhibits the ability to revitalize these communities and the City as a whole. **Source: Corridor Study**

**Neighborhood Conservation:** There has been a great deal of concern in recent years about the lack of an effective mechanism to protect the City's established neighborhoods against the degradation or encroachment by major institutional uses in the City. Many of these neighborhoods contribute significantly to the character of the City, however they do not contain sufficient historic resources for them to be designated as historic districts. Other culturally significant neighborhoods exist in the City that are at-risk due to a deteriorated housing stock, lack of employment opportunities, and numerous other social and economic problems. These neighborhoods are in need of a mechanism, which promotes stability and protects against encroachment without resulting in an undue regulatory burden on the residents. **Source: Previous Study**

**Goal:** Provide clear consistent efficient Board of Architectural Review approval process

**Objectives:**

- Provide clear, distinct guidelines for development
- Streamline the review process so that it is efficient to the point that developers feel that they can react to changing market trends without experiencing costly and unnecessary delays.
- Review the demolition process to see if there are opportunities to improve.

**Goal:** Pursue federal funding assistance to support and leverage local redevelopment efforts.

**Objectives:**

- Fully utilize the Community Development Block Grant Program to leverage development efforts.
- Investigate and pursue as appropriate Section 108 Guaranteed Loans to assist in revitalization efforts.
- Constantly monitor all federal programs to pursue any appropriate funding to support redevelopment efforts.

**Goal:** Create availability of local financing assistance

**Objectives:**

- Work with developers to prepare loan applications that would be more attractive to local and national leaders.
- Provide professionally prepared market studies and feasibility analysis for smaller scale projects to assist in securing funding.

**Goal:** Work with developers to reduce development cost.

**Objectives:**

- Create a program to work with developers to provide a portion of the cost of the predevelopment or development cost of a site including demolition and clearing, environmentally remediation, or infrastructure improvement.

**Goal:** Create an atmosphere for development through investment in public infrastructure

**Objectives:**

- Invest in urban design improvements, including street tree planting, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, street and intersection improvement, new streets and greater parking.
- Implement the recommendations for improvements to the Downtown Mall, including resurfacing of the Mall and expansion of the Mall to the east.
- Work to create diversity of business on the Downtown Mall.

**Goal:** Enhance public transportation to support Economic Development

**Objectives:**

- Coordinate CTS and University bus service with seamliness linked schedules and routes.
- Provide names for all bus stops with signage identifying it by name, such as Lee Park, City Hall, Paramount Theatre, etc.
- Fund a free downtown shuttle linkage to the University.
- Proceed with implementation of a web access, electronic notification and waiting time for the next bus at specific locations.
- Provide free ridership for PVCC and CATEC students.

**Goal:** Create a one-stop shopping/marketing for funding sources.

**Objectives:**

- Organize the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Neighborhood Development Services to jointly provide information to developers regarding financial assistance.

**Goal:** Consolidate marketing efforts

**Objectives:**

- Work with private and non-private interests to better advertise opportunities in commercial areas to consumers.
- Work with Charlottesville Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau and local business groups to market with development themes.

**Goal:** Create a program such as "Main Street" or the use of business improvement districts to provide a more effective tool for the public and private partnership for redevelopment.

**Objectives:**

- Take the concept of public/private partnership inherent in the Main Street program and create such an effort in Charlottesville.
- Consider the formation of two business improvement districts, one for the Downtown Mall and the other for the West Main Street area, to assist with marketing of these areas, maintenance of public areas, management, and improvement of the perception of public safety.

**Goal:** Assist with site assembly assistance and removal of blighted and vacant properties.

**Objectives:**

- Take an active role in assisting developers with acquiring large development sites through land banking or other measures.
- The City can become more active in acquiring properties that are underutilized or vacant that may be blocking future development.
- Consider below market land sales for pieces of publicly owned property that is not particularly well located or to encourage a use on the land that the private market would not consider the highest and best use.

**Goal:** Work to expand tourism as an important part of the economic structure of the City.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to work with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote the City and surrounding area.
- Promote the University of Virginia as a tourist district to tourists already in the area.
- Capture day visitors for overnight stays.
- Complete the Court Square project to enhance the area as a tourist destination.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION

**Street Lighting:** There are concerns that the current method of providing street lights and the lighting of parking lots, buildings and public spaces, while providing adequate lighting for safety purposes, creates an unwanted spillover effect in the residential neighborhoods. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Environmental Sensitivity:** As a compact community, new development must be sensitive to the natural environment. While maximizing efficient and effective density, the City must strive to protect the natural environment and its open space to continue the high quality of life that is what brings people to this community. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Day Care:** Access to day care is a primary concern of Charlottesville residents. As more and more parents come off of welfare and move into the workforce, appropriate day care for their children at affordable rates is essential. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Governmental Cooperation:** In the coming years, regional cooperation of governments will become more important. As resources become even more limited, governments must work together to share their resources and to provide services in a more efficient manner. Government cooperation is necessary to ensure compatible land use and to maximize the potential for transportation alternatives. **Source: Previous Study**

**Utilities:** An area of concern to many residents is the continued access to a good, safe and efficient utility system. The Charlottesville area is blessed with a good water supply and citizen desire to maintain and preserve the system. Additionally, other utility services are regarded as excellent and the desire is to maintain an excellent system. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Quality Government Services:** At the kick-off to the planning process and at the mid-June meeting to discuss goals and issues, many citizens expressed the desire for continued quality governmental services. They expressed concern about governmental size and efficiency and friendly governmental service. **Source: Neighborhoods**

**Hiding Overhead Utilities:** Overhead utilities are cited quite often as a detriment to urban design improvements in many areas throughout the City. Overhead power, phone and cable lines detract from the aesthetic of the City. **Source: Planning Commission**

**Public Safety:** During the neighborhood meetings and through the community survey, many residents have expressed their concern about safety in their neighborhoods. They have stated concerns about crime and traffic safety as issues. **Source: Neighborhoods**



**Goal:** Improve the quality of life in the community by reducing the amount of spill over lighting resulting from development.

**Objectives:**

- Develop a dark skies ordinance to control lighting similar to that in effect in Albemarle County.
- Make lighting a primary emphasis of site plan review to reduce the spill over lighting effect.

**Goal:** Provide a system of utilities that foster continued growth and revitalization of the City.

**Objectives:**

- The City should work with Virginia Power to address tree pruning related to power line maintenance. Develop a coordinated plan with Virginia Power and other utilities to place utilities underground, or at least locate them where they are least visible in the City area and neighborhoods.
- Require new developments to construct on-site facilities or pay a pro-rated share of necessary downstream improvements and facilities. Require adequate drainage provisions on all site plans and subdivisions.
- Encourage developers to make use of state of the art conservation techniques such as north-south orientation of lots, tree planting, and protection of solar access to reduce home heating and cooling costs.
- Make energy conservation an important criteria for all public decisions, including land use decisions. Implement energy conservation measures in all public buildings.
- Complete construction of the new water transmission main between the Observatory Mountain and South Rivanna water treatment plants to ensure adequate water supply for the existing distribution system.

**Goal:** City government should seek to provide the highest quality services to the people of Charlottesville, with dedication to enhancing the quality of life for all and with sensitivity and responsiveness to community needs; should continue to be open, accountable, efficient, courteous, and equitable in the provision of services to its customers; should seek innovative solutions to meet the needs of its residents and to maximize use of limited resources, and; should consider ways to cooperate and communicate effectively with County and University, as well as larger region.

**Objectives:**

- The City should continue to look for increased efficiencies by reducing the number of management layers, consolidating Departments with related functions, reducing or eliminating non-essential services or procedures, and consolidating or eliminating appointed boards based on their effectiveness and ability to meet the City's goals and objectives.
- Services provided by the City should be evaluated in terms of cost, efficiencies and opportunities for out-sourcing/privatization.
- The City, County, and University should continue to explore opportunities to share services, facilities and equipment so that the three entities can provide enhanced services and take advantage of economics of scale. Facilities such as playing fields, recreation centers, and theaters have the potential for joint use. Opportunities to share services such as transit, police, fire, utility service and public facility improvements should also be explored.
- Ensure adequate, effective representation of minorities, women, the disabled, and the socially and economically disadvantaged on City appointed boards and commissions.
- The Planning Commissions should meet regularly with the Albemarle County Planning Commission on issues of interest to each.

**Goal:** Work to continue to provide a City where citizens feel safe in their homes and on the street.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to implement community oriented policing in target neighborhoods.
- Promote the use of CPTED design principles in new development and redevelopment.

- Continue the commitment of resources for improvement of police services.
- Work with the fire department to provide defibrillators in public buildings.

**Goal:** Educate the public about planning to help them become more effective partners in the planning process.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to improve and expand the Neighborhood Development Services website with appropriate and timely information.
- Begin a citizen planning institute as continuing education for graduates for the Neighborhood Leadership Institute and other citizens.

**Goal:** Continue to expand the availability of technology and the availability of service through technology to all citizens.

**Objectives:**

- Implement the integrated systems project in City government to create a seamless system of service delivery to the citizenry.
- Support the efforts of the Virginia Gateway to implement the connected community program to provide technology to the entire community.
- Provide training in technology skills to assist with learning and for increased opportunities