



THE CARY 2040 COMMUNITY PLAN



THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF CARY

Adopted on January 24, 2017



Last amended:
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CARY ACKNOWLEDGES...

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Cary Town Council

Harold Weinbrecht, Mayor
Ed Yerha, Mayor Pro Tem, At-Large Representative
Lori Bush, At-Large Representative
Don Frantz, District B Representative
Ken George, District D Representative
Jennifer Robinson, District A Representative
Jack Smith, District C Representative
Gale Adcock, Mayor Pro-Tem, District D Representative
(through Dec. 2014)

Advisory Boards & Committees

Economic Development Committee
Environmental Advisory Board
Historic Preservation Commission
Information Services Advisory Board
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board
Planning & Zoning Board
Public Art Advisory Board

Committee for the Future

Louis Eldridge, Co-chair
Ronald Runyan, Co-chair
Carol Cutler-White
Dani Deviney
Richard Domann
Judson Drennan
Jo Ann Hines Duncan
Ana Echeverri
Kyle Greer
Dorothy Henderson – Bell
Jeanne Holmes
Leta Huntsinger
Andrew Jarvis
Pooja Joshi
Robert Keely

Toby Kennedy
Bae-Won Koh
Mary Lechene
Howard Manning
Karen Moldt
Andrew Moriarty
Sheila Ogle
Gilbert Pagan
Susan Pruskin
Dhanya Purushothaman/Sandeep
Keith Ramsey
Julia Rudy
Chuck Smith
Kay Struffolino
John Werner
Danna Widmar
Alok Sharma, In Memoriam

Transportation Advisory Group

Robert Bush
Clymer Cease
Teresa Gresham
Leta Huntsinger
Steven Levine
Len Nieman
Susan Russ
Chuck Smith
David Wasserman
Danna Widmar

Cary Chamber of Commerce

Kyle Greer
Howard Johnson





Consultants

Leigh Anne King, Project Manager, Clarion Associates
 VHB
 Planning NEXT
 Randall Gross / Development Economics
 Alta Planning + Design
 Nelson\Nygaard

Core Staff Project Team

Juliet Andes
 Mary Beerman
 Ray Boylston
 Tyler Bray
 Lori Cove
 John Donachie
 Meredith Gruber
 Will Hartye
 Adam Howell
 Jerry Jensen
 Bill Moore
 Justin Oliver
 Scott Ramage
 Anna Readling
 Philip Smith
 Jeff Ulma

Town of Cary Interdepartmental Team

Development Services
 Scot Berry
 Wes Everett
 Dan Matthys
 Finance
 Michelle Brooks
 Karen Mills
 Fire
 Allan Cain
 Mike Cooper
 A. J. Leighton

Human Resources
 Renee Poole
 Inspections and Permits
 Ken Hawley
 Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources
 Dwayne Jones
 Doug McRailey
 Planning
 Wayne Nicholas
 Police
 Tony Godwin
 Public Works
 Scott Hecht
 Bob Holden
 Technology Services
 Leith Britt
 Nicole Raimundo
 Town Manager
 Mike Bajorek
 Emily Barrett
 Lisa Glover
 Deanna Hawkes
 Allison Hutchins
 Lana Hygh
 Kathy Lleras
 Susan Moran
 Russ Overton
 Sean Stegall
 Town Clerk
 Virginia Johnson
 Transportation and Facilities
 Sandi Bailey
 Utilities
 Jamie Revels
 Penny Rosser
 Water Resources
 Jeff Adkins
 Steve Brown

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1. FOUNDATIONS

*Introducing Cary's
Community Plan*



IN THIS CHAPTER:

Cary: Yesterday and Today

Imagining Cary's Future

Our Vision for Cary

Trends and Influences

Using the Plan

Community-Based Planning Effort

What is New in the 2040 Cary
Community Plan?

Relationship of Plan to Town's Land
Development Ordinance

Town's Authority to Adopt a
Comprehensive Plan

CARY COMMUNITY PLAN ▶ 2040

1. FOUNDATIONS



Cary is...

3rd Safest City in the Nation (2014) – wallstreet.com

Top Town for Families (2014) – Forbes and @bizjournals

Sound Investment for Good Living (2014) – Nerdwallet, CNN Money, Forbes

Best Mid-Size City for Relocation (2013) – Movato

Best City for Early Retirement – Kiplinger

Top City for Tech – Forbes

Cary: Yesterday and Today

Starting as a small, rural crossroads community with a rich agricultural heritage, Cary has evolved into a nationally recognized community of distinction. The arrival of the North Carolina Railroad in 1854 and the development of the Research Triangle Park in 1959 were both game changers for the region and for Cary. Over the last thirty years, the Town has attracted Fortune 500 companies, a series of high quality attractive residential developments, commercial growth, and community amenities that put it on the map as the place “where better living begins.” The Town’s population grew from approximately 8,000 residents in 1970 to more than 152,000 in 2015. Today, Cary is known as one of the best mid-sized communities in the nation to live and work, to find a home or start a business, and to raise a family or retire.



Imagining Cary's Future

The purpose of the 2040 Cary Community Plan is to articulate the Town's vision and values and set a course for achieving Cary's desired future. Cary's vision statement below describes the aspirations to continue to be a premier community that will offer new opportunities to live, work, play, shop, and dine in the town we call home.

Our Vision for Cary

The Town of Cary will continue to be the model of a highly-regarded and well-managed community. The interests of residents and businesses will be at the forefront of policies and public investment that foster sustained prosperity.

Since the community is mostly developed, the existing suburban pattern of high quality residential, office, and shopping areas will remain dominant. In strategic and appropriate locations, emerging new development patterns—greater intensity in a walkable, mixed use form—will be encouraged to provide existing and future residents additional choices for living, connecting, working, playing, and shopping.

The attractive physical setting—including both the natural and built environment—strengthens community pride and encourages private investment. This is also true with the consistent delivery of high quality community infrastructure, services and facilities.

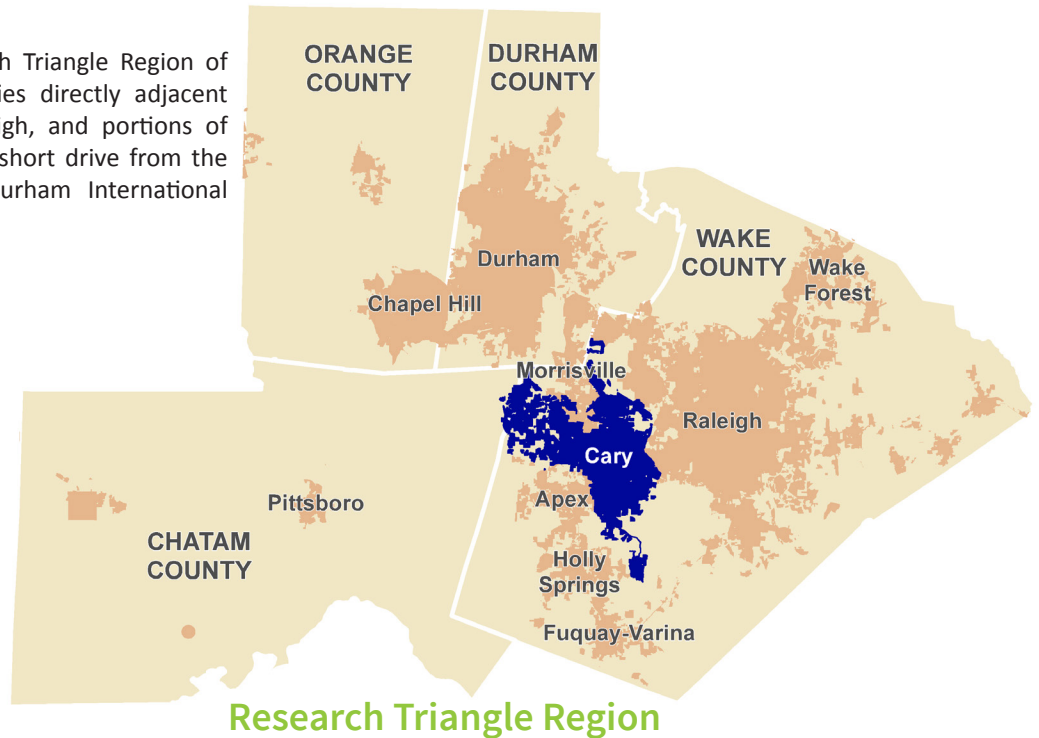
The community also continues to prosper through attention to quality and a commitment to a sense of community, culture, and history, revealing the authentic and special Cary.

We Value...

- Leveraging the Town's Regional Context
- Managing Future Land Use
- Encouraging Redevelopment and Infill Efforts
- Fostering Strong and Sustainable Neighborhoods
- Creating a Vibrant Arts and Cultural Environment
- Fostering a Prosperous Economy and Fiscal Health
- Protecting Nature and the Environment
- Providing Comprehensive and Top Quality Facilities and Infrastructure
- Preserving Historic Resources
- Providing Extensive and High Quality Parks and Recreation
- Providing High Quality Public Services
- Providing an Efficient and Well-Designed Transportation System

CARY IN CONTEXT

Cary is located in heart of the Research Triangle Region of North Carolina. Neighboring communities directly adjacent to Cary include Apex, Morrisville, Raleigh, and portions of unincorporated Wake County. Cary is a short drive from the Research Triangle Park and Raleigh Durham International Airport.



CARY'S PLANNING AREA

This plan focuses not just on the Town of Cary, but more appropriately on Cary's entire land planning area. This area is a boundary that outlines the outermost extent of where the Town of Cary may grow in the future. According to agreements with neighboring jurisdictions, Cary cannot extend beyond this boundary. The land planning area consists of four distinct geographies:

Town of Cary Corporate Limits

This is the formal area known as the Town of Cary. The Town provides utility services within this area and plans and zones for all land within the Town limits. Residents living in Cary pay Town taxes and can vote for Town Council members.

Town of Cary Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

These are special planning areas granted jointly by the Town and Wake County as permitted by the State of North Carolina. ETJ areas lie outside of the Town's corporate limits. The purpose of ETJ in North Carolina is to allow for municipalities to plan for areas that may become part of the community's corporate limits in the foreseeable future and that may require public utility services, such as potable water and sanitary sewer. Properties in the ETJ are planned and zoned for by the Town of Cary; however, residents living in the ETJ are not Cary citizens and they do not pay Town taxes, nor can they vote for Town Council members. The ETJ does have representation on the Town of Cary's Planning and Zoning Board.

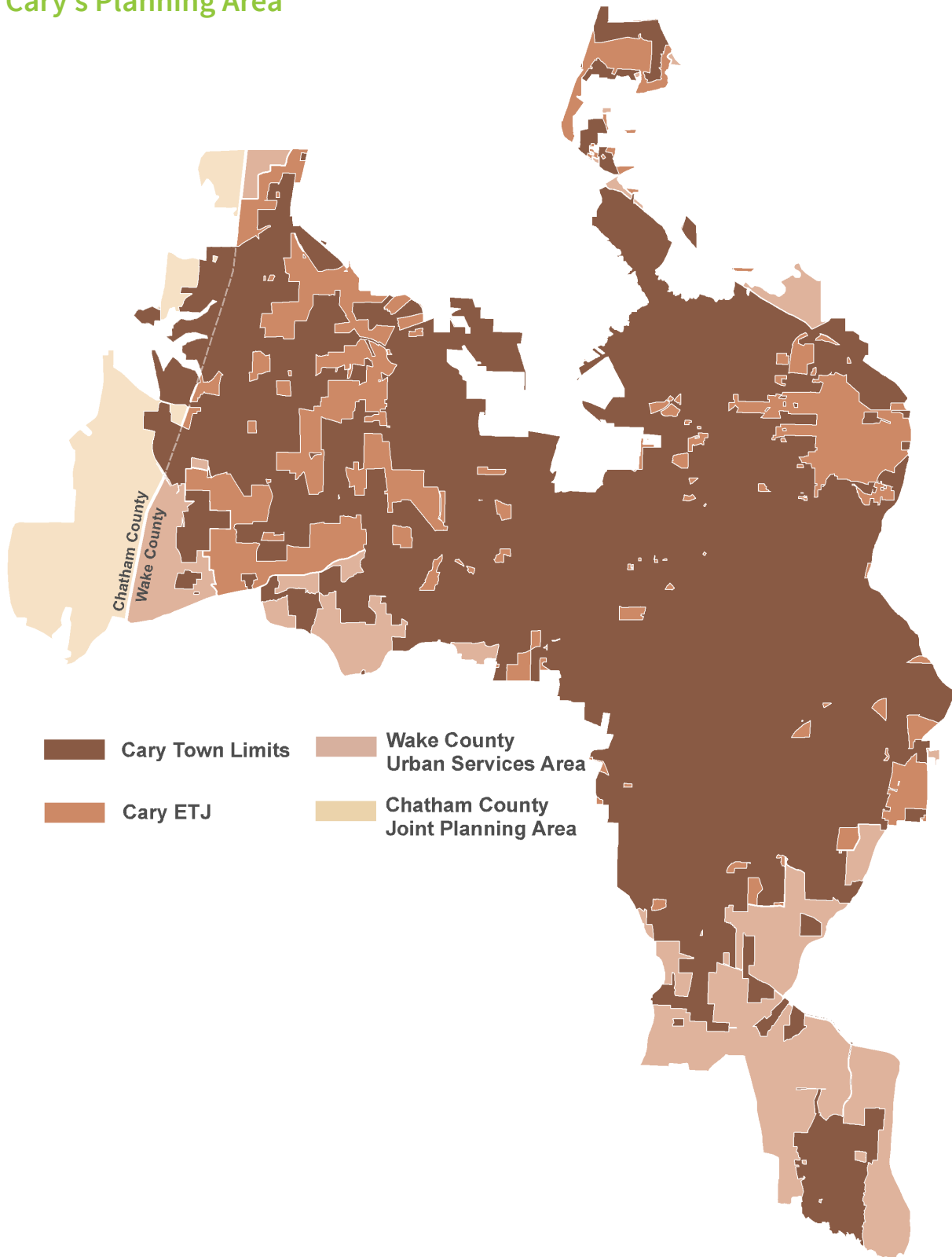
Town of Cary Urban Services Boundary

These are special planning areas designated by Wake County for the Town of Cary and the other 11 municipalities in the County. Cary's Urban Services Boundary is a geographic area contiguous to the Town's corporate limits and ETJ in which Wake County has determined that the Town may someday provide public utilities.

Chatham County – Town of Cary Joint Planning Area

Chatham County does not define formal Urban Services Areas for its municipalities. However, the Chatham-Cary Joint Land Use Plan, adopted June 2012, effectively identifies the portion of Chatham County that might someday be served by, or is eligible to be served by the Town of Cary for public utility services. This area is included within the Cary land planning area.

Cary's Planning Area



Trends & Influences

The high quality of life enjoyed in Cary has propelled its growth up until now. However, national, regional, and local trends suggest a changing context for the Town, and have spurred community conversations about the future of Cary. Early on in the Imagine Cary planning effort, several key trends and influences were identified that will likely impact Cary's future.

AGING AND DIVERSIFYING POPULATION

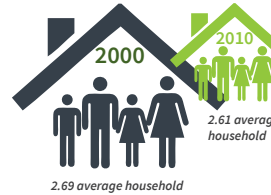
As is the case in many communities across the country, Cary's population is aging and diversifying. We see retiring baby boomers, professional workers choosing to wait longer to start a family or not have a family at all, an increasing number of single person households, and growth in racial and ethnic diversity.

Cary has, over the years, developed a family-friendly reputation based on a suburban community model. But national trends show that the demographic changes being experienced here and elsewhere are increasingly accompanied by changes in household preferences that impact housing, transportation, and other lifestyle choices. This Community Plan offers an opportunity to identify ways that Cary can maintain its high quality suburban community experience, while also accommodating the lifestyle preferences of this changing population.



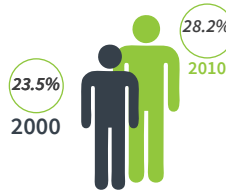
More Seniors

Cary residents over the age of 55 increased from 12% to 18% between 2000 and 2010.



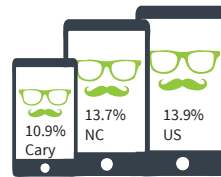
Smaller Households

Cary's average household size and family size decreased between 2000 and 2010



More Singles

Unmarried singles in Cary increased from 23.5% in 2000 to 28.2% in 2010



Fewer Millennials

The % of the Millennial aged population in Cary is lower than in NC and the US.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

LIMITED LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT

Land available for new development in Cary's planning jurisdiction is limited by formal agreements with neighboring communities. These agreements delineate the boundary within which Cary can provide utility services in the future and ultimately the areas Cary can annex into the Town. Today, only 18% of land in the Town's planning jurisdiction is available for development.

In the past, Cary has been a model for high quality new developments built on vacant or agricultural land. Now, with both limited land for development and the presence of aging commercial and residential developments, the Town faces a changing paradigm where new projects will increasingly come in the form of infill development and redevelopment of existing properties. With this shift comes the need to redefine development opportunities and the regulations and design standards that will shape evolving areas of Town, while continuing to protect Cary's natural resources.

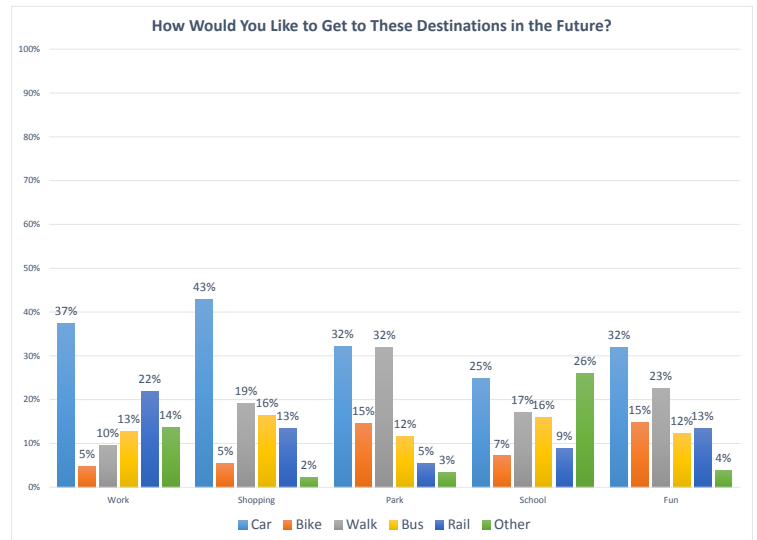


Because only 18% of Cary's planning and zoning area is undeveloped, future development will come more and more in the form of infill development and redevelopment of existing developed sites.

INCREASING TRANSPORTATION DEMANDS

Today, Cary’s transportation network provides an excellent system of streets, award-winning greenways, miles of sidewalks, and bicycle facilities. Combined, these transportation facilities support a commuting local workforce, recreational enthusiasts, and regional travelers. But with the expected regional population growth, projected future travel demand on roadways over the next 20 years increasingly will exceed existing roadway capacities. As Cary’s roadway network becomes built out and as Federal and State transportation funding sources continue to diminish, there will likely be a shift in focus from building new infrastructure to maintaining the existing system. Compounding these challenges is the increasing cost of infrastructure improvements resulting in the need to use existing infrastructure more efficiently.

Cary’s residents have demonstrated their support for transportation choices that will allow residents and workers to drive, walk, bike, take the bus, or even possibly ride regional rail to destinations. Expanding alternative travel options while maintaining vehicular mobility will require changes in development patterns as well as improvements to the transportation network. The challenge facing Cary is to provide future residents with a complete range of choices that are operationally and fiscally efficient.

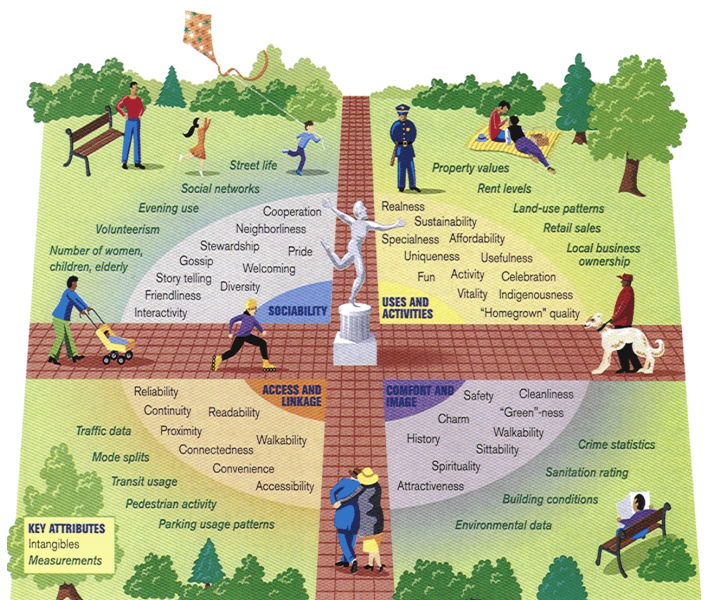


When Cary residents were asked how they would like to get around in the future, they expressed a desire for a variety of transportation choices regardless of the final destination.

DEMAND FOR 21ST CENTURY DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

Cary is known for its high-quality suburban neighborhoods, commercial centers, and business parks. These developments have helped make Cary the community of distinction that it is today. However, preferences for these places may be changing. As evidenced by input from Cary’s citizens and business leaders, there is demand for new 21st century developments that reflect evolving lifestyles and workplace environments. National trends show that people want to be more connected, and they want to live and work in an active and vibrant environment that makes it easier to be connected to friends and neighbors, to community services and activities, and to easily access destinations. Many polls show that retirees and young professionals both desire the same type of living environment: one that is walkable, connected, affordable, and vibrant.

It will be important for Cary to accommodate the housing needs of its aging and diversifying residential population and growing local workforce. Likewise, the Town will need to consider the locational needs of target industries to make sure employment centers offer the type of workplace environment that modern businesses desire.

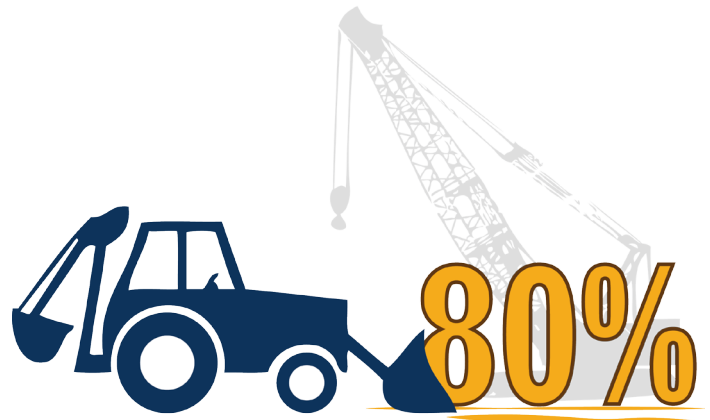


Making a great place doesn't happen by accident. There are many key attributes and design features needed to create successful places.

FUTURE FISCAL CHALLENGES

Cary is fortunate to have a strong fiscal base to support the delivery of community amenities and services ranging from police and fire protection to the Town's wonderful parks and event spaces. Town government in Cary has proven to be an effective and conservative guardian of the Town's assets and resources, enabling the Town to gain a strong fiscal position and maintain one of the lowest tax rates in Wake County. Cary has experienced significant levels of growth and development for several decades under sound fiscal management. During this period of growth, the Town's revenues increased along with property valuations, covering the expenses of delivering additional services and maintaining existing infrastructure. An estimated 80% of that revenue growth, on average, has been generated by the addition of new tax base to the Town. In fact, the Town has seen a direct correlation between population growth and tax revenue growth.

As Cary runs out of land for development and enters a new phase of slower growth in the next 10 to 20 years, the Town could experience a declining rate of revenue growth. Meanwhile, the cost of providing services and maintaining infrastructure like parks and recreation and water and sewer service is expected to rise and the annual increase in costs could eventually surpass the increase in revenues at current tax rates. Added to the challenge is demand for increasing services and new community amenities, and an aging infrastructure that will require future maintenance investments. Cary's challenge will be to identify fiscally sustainable revenue generation models supported by the community that can continue to provide high quality services and facilities to existing and future residents.



In Cary, new development drives the growth of public revenues that have supported the Town's ability to provide high quality community amenities and services. On average, 80% of new revenue growth comes from new tax base to the Town. As growth slows due to limited land for development, new revenue generation models will be needed to maintain the level of service residents have come to expect.



Using the Plan

Plan Organization

The Cary Community Plan is organized into ten chapters: this Foundations chapter (plan introduction and background), seven thematic chapters (Live, Work, Shop, Shape, Engage, Move, Serve), the Act chapter (sets a course for strategically implementing the plan), and the Appendix (includes supporting documents developed during the course of Imagine Cary).

The seven thematic chapters set out a policy context and policy framework, with each chapter including sections that address three main topics: challenges and opportunities, goals and policies, and strategic actions. In addition, these chapters conclude with cross-references to related policy direction in other chapters.

FOUNDATIONS	introduction about the plan
LIVE	neighborhoods housing
WORK	economy workplaces
SHOP	places to shop and dine
ENGAGE	historic places parks and culture
SHAPE	land planning character of growth
MOVE	transportation choices
SERVE	public services fiscal health
ACT	action plan to achieve vision
APPENDICES	technical information

Purpose of Plan

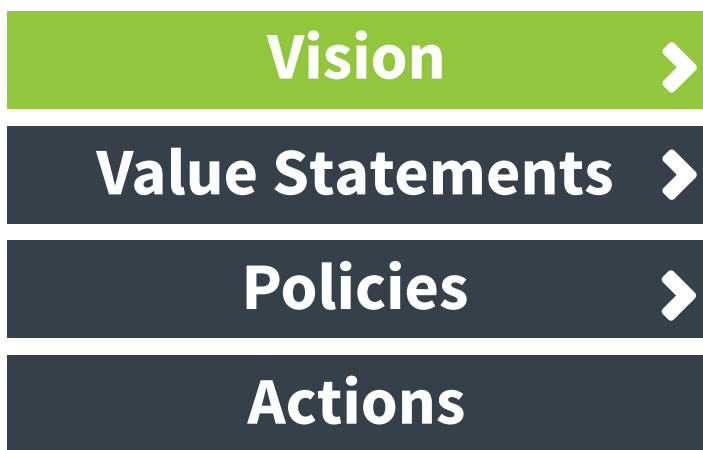
The plan should serve multiple purposes:

- as a guide for public decision-making related to development proposals;
- for coordinating planning efforts between the Town and adjacent jurisdictions;
- for planning for future service and facility needs;
- for qualifying for state and federal grant programs;
- as a marketing tool used to showcase the key initiatives that will continue to maintain Cary’s competitive edge as a premier community to live, work, play, learn, and raise a family; and
- as a guide for establishing annual work plans for Town departments.

Policy Guidance

The plan’s policy guidance is set out in a four part structure:

- (1) An overarching **vision statement** that articulates the future aspirations for Cary. This statement is provided at the beginning of each chapter.
- (2) **Value statements** that set out the critical values the community holds that drove development of this plan. The value statements are presented on the cover page for each chapter.
- (3) Specific **policies** that aid in day-to-day decision-making to achieve the community’s vision, including policy intent statements that provide guidance about implementation of policies. The policy statements are provided within the body of each chapter.
- (4) Specific **actions** that the Town may take to make the vision a reality. (Note: The stated actions provide general direction, but may vary in response to changing circumstances.) The actions are described towards the end of each chapter, and brought together in Chapter 9, ACT.



Community-Based Planning Effort



PART 1: THE CHARTER FOR CREATING THE CARY COMMUNITY PLAN (2012)

Due to the complexity of the undertaking, the Town decided to approach this initiative in two parts. In 2012, the project team worked with Town Council and Town departments to develop the Charter for Creating a Cary Community Plan – the plan for effectively creating “the plan.” The Charter provided detailed guidance for development of the plan and the public engagement process.

PART 2: THE IMAGINE CARY PLANNING EFFORT (2013-2016)

Building on its commitment to planning, transparency and citizen involvement, the Town of Cary undertook an ambitious four-year planning effort to update Cary’s comprehensive plan. Imagine Cary was a first-of-its-kind effort by the Town to update and connect its many specific topic plans into a single, integrated and comprehensive policy guide for the future. It also marked the first time in the Town’s planning history to simultaneously generate a coordinated and integrated economic, land use, and transportation vision for the Town.



DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Cary has had a long, successful history of creating plans that guide growth and investment in the community. Starting with the Town’s first comprehensive plan in 1991, “Cary . . . Growing With a Vision”, Cary has maintained a commitment to its comprehensive plan and uses it to guide decisions related to capital investments, desired development patterns, and design of new developments. That plan was followed in 1996 with a new land use plan, and a series of individual plans for affordable housing, parks, growth management, and other topics, and multiple small area plans. By 2012 the Town had 20 planning documents and 12 volumes in its comprehensive plan.

In late 2010, the Town of Cary began considering the need to update several of the Town’s existing plans for a few geographic areas. It became clear that a more pressing need was to undertake a comprehensive update to the entire policy context rather than updating individual component parts. As a result, in 2011, the Cary Town Council directed Town staff to conduct a complete review of all plans and create a new and more consolidated comprehensive Community Plan -- a consensus vision document to guide decisions and achieve a desired future. This process included an update to all volumes of the current comprehensive plan, including the Town’s Comprehensive Transportation Plan to better integrate it with the Town’s growth framework that guides development decisions.

Through the guidance of the Charter, the Imagine Cary process was designed to be inclusive, focused, inspirational, and sustainable. The plan was generated through the integration of technical analysis and community aspirations set out in four distinct phases of plan development:

1. Values and Vision
2. Community Choices
3. Plan Framework
4. Plan Adoption



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The 2040 Cary Community Plan was developed using the most robust public engagement process in the Town's history. The planning process actively sought public input using a variety of traditional and innovative web-based methods to educate and engage the community.

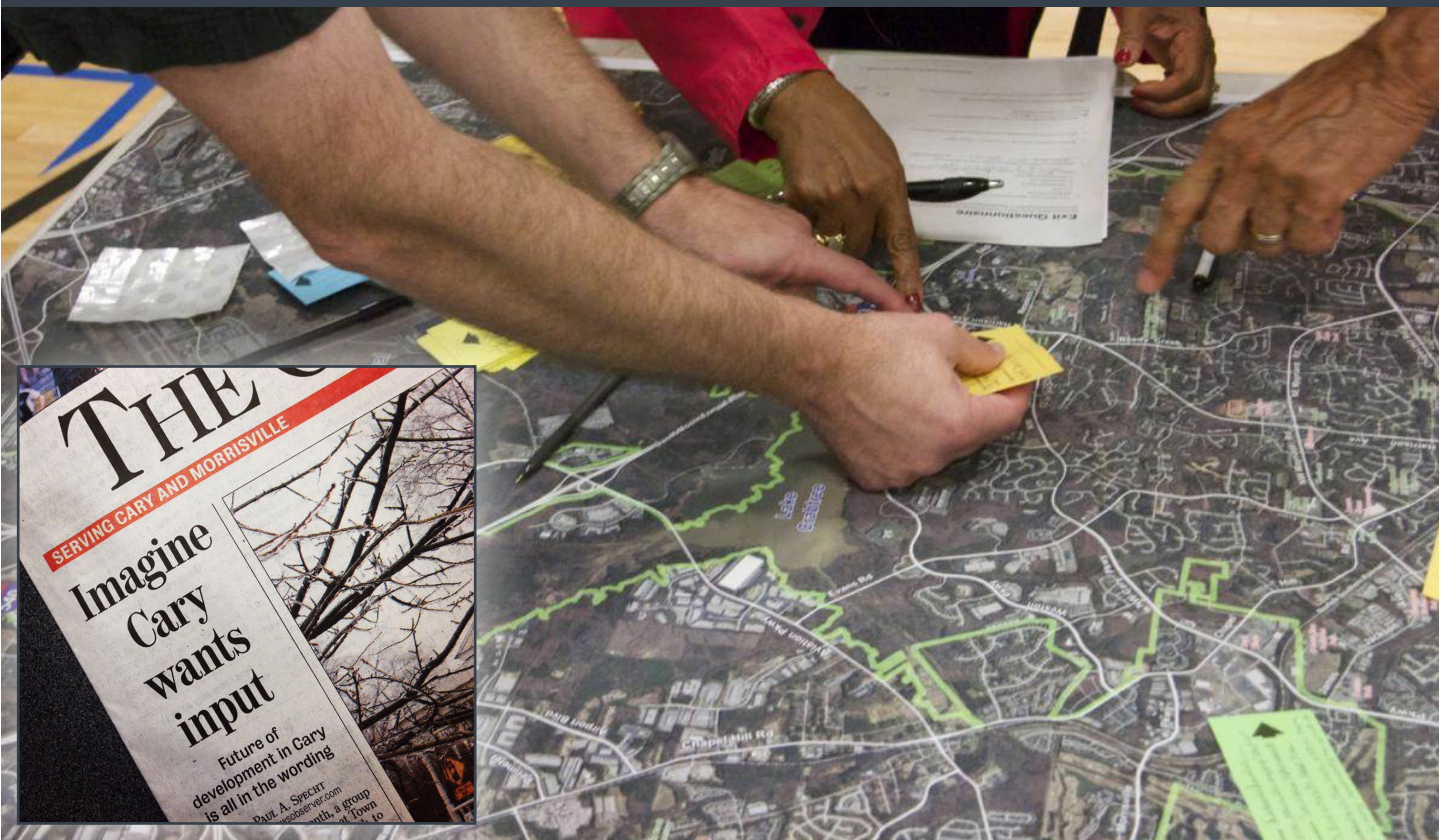


Phase 1: Vision & Values Input

14 events
 Online testing
 4,000 unique ideas generated
 1,191 participants

Phase 2: Community Choices

4 events
 Online testing
 866 participants



What is new in the 2040 Cary Community Plan?

Building upon the sound plans already in place, the 2040 Cary Community Plan sets out a new policy framework that incorporates many relevant policies developed under previous planning efforts, as well as many new policy objectives. New topics include:

Economic Policies and Strategies

The plan establishes economic policies and strategies to guide the Town's economic development efforts.

Integration of Land Use and Transportation Plans

The plan integrates land use and transportation plans using a new approach (the Future Growth Framework) that tested the impacts of future development ideas on the Town's transportation network, and that provides design guidance for transportation improvements to align with the vision for future land use.

Focus on Downtown Cary

The plan emphasizes downtown as the heart and soul of Cary, and a priority for redevelopment and community investment.

Neighborhood Protection and Housing Choices

The plan sets out policies and strategies to provide greater housing choices, including housing for a variety of incomes, lifestyles, and stages of life, while also protecting and stabilizing Cary's established neighborhoods.

New Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities

The plan encourages and guides future infill and redevelopment efforts in targeted locations, and encourages development of new tools to guide design of redevelopment and infill projects.

Destination Centers

The plan fosters development of strategically located and vertically integrated mixed use developments to serve as key destination centers for regional attraction.

Transit-Oriented Development

The plan sets the stage for future regional transit improvements that will likely be developed during the planning horizon (2040), and the associated transit-oriented development that will support transit ridership in the future.



Relationship of Plan to Town's Land Development Ordinance

The Cary Community Plan is a long-range policy document that provides guidance to the Town's current and future decision-makers regarding land development, capital improvements, and public programs. In contrast, the Town's Land Development Ordinance is the set of Town laws that govern land development. The regulations in the Land Development Ordinance set out the specific uses permitted on individual properties, the density and intensity of development that can occur, and how developments are designed. These regulations also provide property owners in Cary with certain rights to development.

The Town of Cary's Land Development Ordinance consists of a zoning map and a written ordinance that divides the Town into zoning districts, including various mixed use, residential, commercial, and industrial districts. The land development regulations describe what type of land use and specific activities are permitted in each district, and also regulate how buildings, signs, parking, and other construction may be placed on a lot. These regulations also provide procedures for re-zonings and other planning activities.

While the 2040 Cary Community Plan and in particular, the Future Growth Framework Map found in Chapter 6, provides guidance to decision-makers regarding the future development or use of property, capital investments, or community programs; the Land Development Ordinance defines the actual laws that apply to each property in the Town's planning jurisdiction. Implementation of this plan may in some instances require amendments to the Land Development Ordinance. Any proposed amendment to the Land Development Ordinance will require a separate public hearing and review process, with a final decision made by Town Council.

Town's Authority to Adopt a Comprehensive Plan

Cary's ability to adopt and implement a comprehensive plan is drawn from its state-authorized general police power to "define, regulate, prohibit, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of its citizens" per North Carolina General Statute § 160A-174.

In North Carolina, municipal zoning enabling statutes have long required that zoning regulations be made "in accordance with a comprehensive plan." However, neither the North Carolina statutes nor case law mandate preparation of comprehensive plans, define their elements, or set a mandatory procedure for their adoption. Local governments can choose to develop or not to develop a plan.

In 2005, the state zoning statutes were amended to strengthen the role of adopted plans where they do exist. This law requires that boards reviewing proposed zoning amendments include a written recommendation that addresses the consistency of the proposed amendment with the comprehensive plan and any other relevant plans (such as a small area plan, a corridor plan, or a transportation plan) that have been adopted by Town Council. The Town Council is also required to adopt a statement on plan consistency when adopting or rejecting any zoning amendment. While this statement is required, it does not limit the Town Council's discretionary power to adopt or not adopt zoning amendments.

Services and Facilities Provided by Cary

- Community facilities and greenways
- Emergency management service (EMS)
- Maintenance of town-owned streets
- Parks, recreation, and cultural resources
- Police and fire protection
- Regulating development
- Solid waste and recycling
- Water and wastewater services

Provided by Other Jurisdictions

- Libraries
- Public schools
- Social services
- Streets not owned and managed by Cary

2. LIVE

Fostering Strong Neighborhoods



IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Challenges and Opportunities
- Policy Direction
- How We Will Achieve Our Vision
- Creating Compatible Developments Using Context Sensitive Designs
- Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

The residential development boom over the last thirty years laid the fabric for Cary's neighborhoods today, including several of the best designed master planned communities in the Triangle region. In the future, these neighborhoods will still maintain their prominence in the community and efforts will be made to protect and enhance them as they age. In addition, new housing options will be made available in strategic locations for households with different lifestyle preferences.

CARY VALUES:

Fostering Strong and Sustainable Neighborhoods

Cary will maintain existing strong residential areas as well as create new sustainable neighborhoods supported by mixed uses and activities. This includes additional residential choices for a variety of lifestyles, ages, cultures, and incomes organized in a walkable pattern.

2. LIVE

Challenges and Opportunities

Cary's Changing Population

Cary's evolving population will have an impact on housing demand in the future. One of the biggest challenges facing Cary is making sure there are adequate housing choices for the changing population, while maintaining the traditional character of Cary.

An Aging Population

National and regional trends are changing the face of Cary. The onset of aging baby boomers and the region's increasing attractiveness to retirees has led Cary's median age to become the 3rd oldest of the 14 largest cities in North Carolina, surpassed only by Asheville and Gastonia. The median age of Cary residents in 2000 was 33.7 increasing to 37.7 in 2011.

Growing Ethnic and Racial Diversity

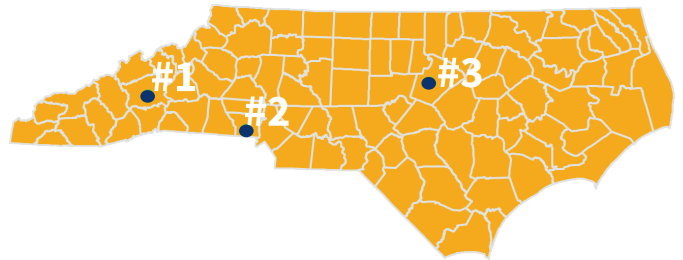
In addition to the Town's traditional African American minority population, Cary has become more racially and ethnically diverse over the last decade, with the Asian population rising from 8.1% in 2000 to 13% in 2010. The Hispanic/Latino population rose from 4.3% to 7.7% during the same period. The area east of Downtown Cary is home to the 6th highest concentration of Hispanic / Latino residents in North Carolina. In total, Asian and Hispanic/Latino residents make up 20% of the Town's total population. Cary's residents that are foreign born are also on the rise from 5% in 1990 increasing to 20% in 2010.

Changing Household Types and Sizes

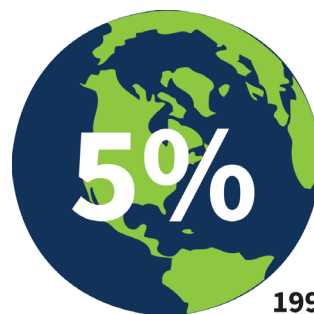
Households are becoming smaller with more single person households, more couples waiting longer to marry, more married couples without children, and more households with unrelated roommates. For example, the number of unmarried singles in Cary increased from 23.5% in 2000 to 28.2% in 2010, and the number of people living alone increased from 21% to 23.9%. Between 1990 and 2010, the number of family households decreased from 85% to 70%. National projections anticipate that by 2025, the number of single person households will equal the number of family households.

Missing Millennial Generation

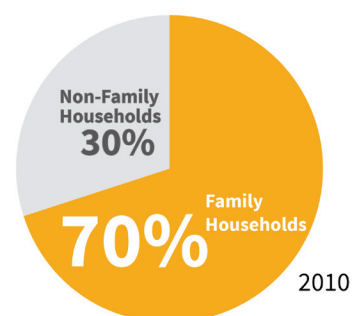
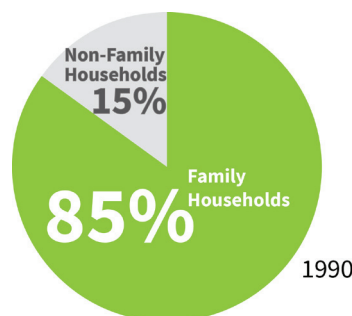
The one national and regional trend that is not tracking in Cary is the increase in the millennial population born between 1980 and 2000. In 2010, 10.9% of Cary's population were millennials compared to 13.7% in North Carolina and 13.9% for the entire U.S.



In 2010, Cary's population was the 3rd oldest of the 14 largest cities in North Carolina



% of Cary's population that was foreign born



The U.S. Census defines a **family household** to be one where a minimum of two people in a household are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. A **non-family household** is defined by the Census as a household where a person lives alone, or that none of the household members are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Evolving Housing Market Trends and Preferences

Cary has a national reputation as being a premier suburban community located within the heart of the Research Triangle Region. The Town has been very successful at providing high-quality single-family housing for families in desirable neighborhoods. The challenge moving forward is to provide quality, housing options in convenient locations that can serve households seeking a different lifestyle in Cary.

Housing Preferences vs. Housing Stock

With millennials surpassing the baby boomer generation in size, their preferences will have a significant impact on Cary’s local housing market. As reported in a 2015 study published by the Urban Land Institute, millennials “represent the largest source of new demand for rental housing and first-time home purchases.” While there is much debate about the future housing preference of millennials, research shows that in 2013 convenience to jobs, affordability of housing and quality of local school districts are the main factors that younger homebuyers were looking for, in contrast with older generations that wanted convenience to friends, family, and health facilities. Similarly, an Urban Land Institute study published in 2013 revealed that 63% of millennials want to live in a place where they do not have to use their car very often.

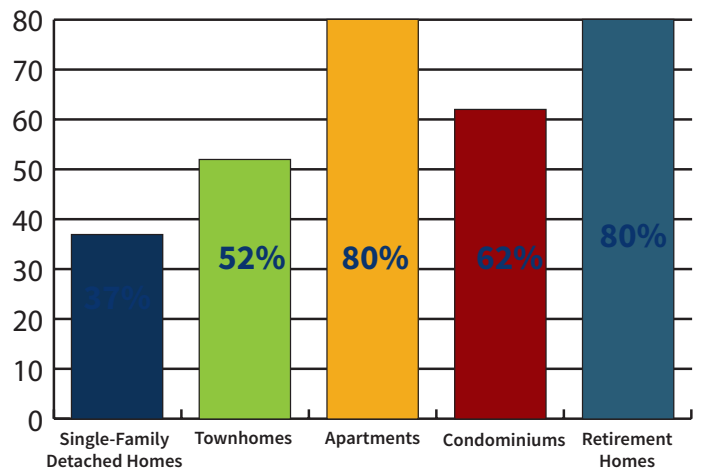
The vast majority of Cary’s housing is single-family units that do not provide short pedestrian or bicycle commutes to employment or shopping centers, or proximate access to local bus stops. To accommodate housing succession for future generations of buyers, a more balanced housing mix that provides accessibility to destinations is needed.

Changes in Ownership vs. Rental Markets

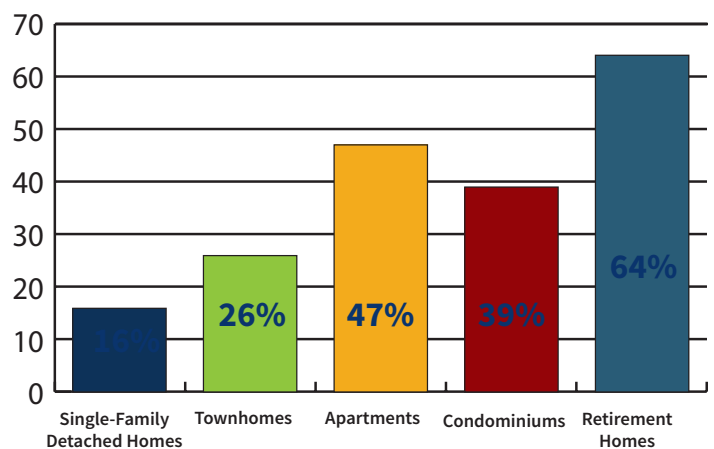
Some research seems to suggest that empty nesters and young professionals have similar desires for housing. This includes housing located in quality, walkable neighborhoods proximate to shopping, dining, and employment areas with minimal property maintenance freeing up time for other more enjoyable activities.

Related to this trend is an increasing demand for rental housing. This demand will likely continue given the financial challenges of first time homebuyers and changing preferences and incomes of aging seniors. Depleted financial confidence, high unemployment, student loan debt and poor credit are some of the reported reasons for the decline in homeownership among millennials. While surveys suggest that homeownership is still a goal of the younger generation, they are entering the market later than previous generations, creating a greater ongoing demand for rental housing.

Access To Shopping:
Percent of Homes within 1/4 Mile of Commercial Centers



Access To Local Transit:
Percent of Homes within 1/4 Mile of C-Tran Bus Stop



Single-family housing makes up the vast majority of the Town’s current housing stock. Only a small percentage of single-family detached homes in Cary provide pedestrian and bicycle access to shopping centers and to local bus stops. To address changing housing preferences, more housing choices are needed that can provide better accessibility to destinations.

Housing Preferences for Aging Seniors

Evidence suggests that approximately two thirds of the nation's senior population wants to age in their current community. While many of Cary's seniors will likely choose to stay in their own home, some households are seeking housing alternatives that are more affordable, provide better accessibility features that address mobility challenges, create more opportunities for engagement with neighbors and friends, are better served by transit, and are more accessible to healthcare and other needed services and activities. Aging in community provides more health benefits to aging seniors because social interaction is one of the key indicators of health outcomes. Many senior housing models exist for encouraging social interaction: continuing care retirement communities, age-restricted apartments and condominiums, co-housing developments, and neighborhood eldercare homes.



Glacier Circle is California's cutting edge example of a premier senior co-housing development where a dozen residents who have known each other for years share in the management of the neighborhood, creating a strong sense of connection and community.



Protecting and Enhancing Existing Neighborhoods

Need to Maintain Quality Neighborhoods

Cary had a significant housing boom over the last two decades, comprising nearly 90% of the housing stock in Cary's neighborhoods. In 2013, the Town had approximately 4,000 homes that were more than 40 years old, most of them located proximate to downtown. By 2032, it is estimated that 23,000 homes will be 40 years old. Looking long-term, these aging neighborhoods will need maintenance and investment to maintain attractiveness to new home buyers and renters.

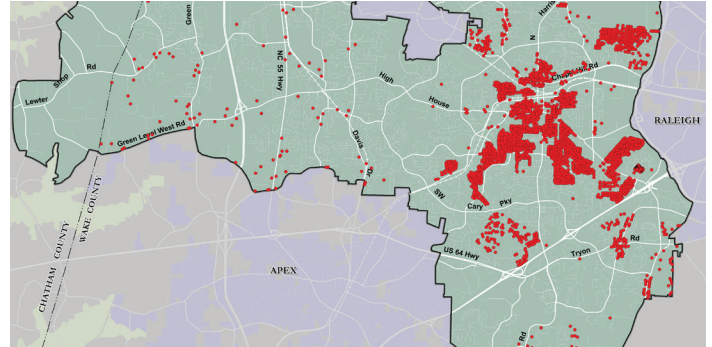
Challenges of Aging Housing and Neighborhoods

With the passing of time, neighborhoods do age and change. The aging of a neighborhood brings many things: vegetation and trees become mature, families grow up, and a neighborhood feels "established." But challenges can also arise. Many communities across the U.S. have experienced challenges in maintaining older neighborhoods. Issues range from neighborhood disinvestment and housing vacancies, to redevelopment of lots that is out of character with surrounding homes. Redevelopment and infill development can be opportunities to modernize homes and neighborhoods, while also upholding the unique character and design of a neighborhood.

Some neighborhoods in Cary were developed along major roads that have been improved and widened over time. This can often lessen the desirability of the homes along corridors due to traffic and noise impacts. These contexts might be good opportunities to evaluate a change to a more appropriate use that fits the changed environment.

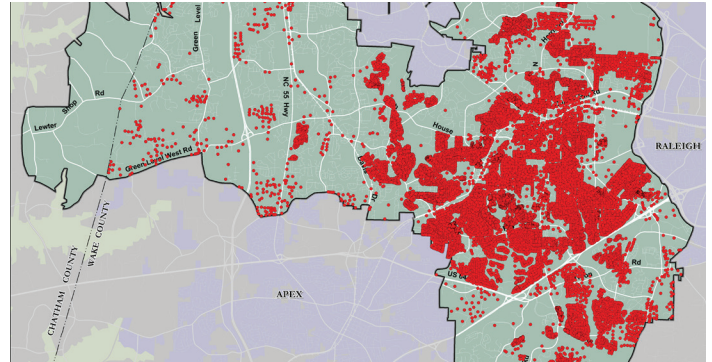
2012

Cary's 40+ Year Old Homes in 2012



2032

Cary's 40+ Year Old Homes in 2032



Over time, roads have been widened in Cary to address traffic congestion, and have resulted in negative impacts to homes that front these roads. These impacts include more traffic, noise, and losing the sense of character that the narrower road once provided.

Housing to Support Economic Development Efforts

Capturing Next Generation Employees by Offering Next Generation Housing

Cary’s business community is engaged in recruiting high quality talent from across the globe. What employers are finding is that younger members of the workforce value work/life balance, environment and business culture, and a community’s quality of life just as much as they do their salary. This “live first and work second” ethic requires that communities think about how the built environment and community amenities can support economic development efforts. There are opportunities in Cary to provide lifestyle choices, such as compact mixed use communities that can support true learn, work, and play within a short walk from home.

Work Where You Live

In 2010, nearly 25% of U.S. workers reported telecommuting from home for some or all of their work. Research conducted by Cisco Systems suggests that nearly two thirds of U.S. workers would trade their high paying jobs for a lower paying job that allowed them to telecommute from home. Another similar trend is the rise of live/work units that allow business owners to live above their shops or offices. Just as workplace environments are evolving, so are the housing preferences of many of our nation’s workers and business owners.

Supporting Housing Affordability

Past planning efforts and affordable housing studies have revealed that finding affordable housing in Cary is a challenge, particularly for those earning at or below the area median income. Cary leaders have worked to increase the amount of affordable housing in town to promote economic, racial and ethnic diversity, while also enlarging the pool of workers for local employers, including Town government. The Town helps to provide affordable housing within its limits by providing funding assistance to developers and non-profit organizations to build low-cost housing and rental units. As of 2013, the Town helped to develop over 200 units of affordable single-family housing and over 500 units of affordable multi-family housing through the utilization of public funding, collaborations with nonprofit organizations, and public-private partnerships.

The Town of Cary defines households in need of affordable housing assistance according to calculations set out by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Federal guidelines define affordable owner-occupied housing as being for individuals and families earning between 60% and 80% of area median income, and affordable rental housing as being for individuals and families earning up to 60% of the area median income. These numbers are updated annually to reflect current



The Martin Corner is an innovative mixed use redevelopment that provides neighborhood amenities, commercial office space, and housing options under one roof near Nashville’s center city Five Points retail district.



Meridian at Harrison Pointe luxury apartments are an in town example of how housing can be integrated with commercial uses to create a mixed use and walkable environment for residents. Often called “horizontal mixed use,” the apartments are located proximate to the commercial center and are connected by sidewalks and streets.

area median incomes. The general rule of thumb for affordability is that a household spends 30% or less of household income to pay for all related housing expenses. Including transportation expenses, the rule of thumb for affordability increases to 45% of a household’s income. For example, affordable housing for a household earning \$40,000 would ideally cost \$1,000 or less monthly to pay for all housing expenses (mortgage, rent, utilities, etc.) Affordable housing and transportation for a household earning \$40,000 would ideally cost \$1,500 or less monthly for all housing and transportation expenses. With current housing costs in Cary, many households are outpriced in the local housing market and must live in neighboring communities or in inadequate housing.



Policy Direction

In order to respond to the housing challenges and opportunities facing Cary, including providing a variety of housing choices and meeting new household needs while also maintaining high-quality established neighborhoods, the Town of Cary’s housing policies are:

Policy	Policy Intent
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Policy 1: Maintain Neighborhood Character	
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<p>Recognize, preserve, and protect the quality and character of existing residential neighborhoods as they mature, and as new development occurs nearby.</p>	<p>The intent of this policy is to preserve or improve the character, ambiance, property values, desirability, and cohesiveness of neighborhoods, as well as to proactively prevent neighborhood decline. This policy is primarily intended to be applied to neighborhoods that are either in decline, threatened with decline or at a “tipping point” between advance and decline. The policy is more likely therefore to be focused on older rather than newer neighborhoods, recognizing that over time the number of “older neighborhoods” will steadily increase.</p> <p>To assist in making the determination about the status of a neighborhood (stable, threatened with decline, at a tipping point between stable and decline, or in decline), several metrics can be analyzed by the Town to compare past and current conditions in a neighborhood. (These metrics can be developed as part of implementation of Strategy #2: Strong Neighborhoods Initiative.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of nuisance complaints and code enforcement issues occurring in the neighborhood • Number of building permits being applied for • New visual impacts or property maintenance issues • Property valuation changes over time for the neighborhood in comparison to comparable neighborhoods, all similar property types in Town, or Town-wide averages <p>This information, along with input from neighborhood residents and landowners, can be used to help identify the status of the neighborhood and the most appropriate approaches for stabilizing it. Policy objectives should be tailored to the particular needs of a neighborhood, and might include (for example) one or more of the following: (1) encouraging reinvestment in homes, including renovations, additions and landscaping; (2) strengthening the visual and amenity appeal of the neighborhood; (3) protecting the character of historic neighborhoods; (4) increasing the share of owner-occupied (versus renter-occupied) single family housing; and (5) encouraging and facilitating new development and redevelopment.</p>
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A particular problem facing older neighborhoods occurs when a thoroughfare fronted by older homes is widened to four or more lanes, threatening the fronting homes and neighborhoods with decline. The impact of such widenings on homes can be mitigated through a variety of means, including retrofitting the road with a median, skinnying lanes, retrofitting front yards with low fences or walls, creating front yard grade elevations above road level, and others. Some towns also consider rezoning the fronting properties to allow redevelopment with townhomes, patio homes, or small multifamily.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 2: Provide More Housing Choices for All Residents

Provide high quality housing in suitable areas that can accommodate a variety of lifestyles, households, ages, cultures, market preferences, and incomes. This includes dwellings for aging seniors and empty nesters, multi-generational households, young professionals, young families, and members of the local workforce.

The intent of this policy is to recognize and accommodate the fact that Cary's residents increasingly reflect a diverse mix of family/household sizes, ages, races and ethnicities, incomes, and needs and abilities. A diversity of housing products is and will be needed to meet the needs of these residents.

One particular objective of this policy is to encourage an adequate supply of housing suitable for our growing diversity of household types, including singles, couples without children, couples with children, single-parent households, empty-nest couples, seniors, and multi-generational households. Another objective is to encourage an adequate supply of housing for Cary's growing senior population, which might include smaller homes, small-lot homes, patio homes, multifamily housing, life care communities, and other options, and at diverse price points. The proximity of such housing to services and amenities is of high importance. This policy also encourages the provision of housing for those who are mobility-challenged, have disabilities, or special needs. Housing for seniors and others who have mobility challenges are encouraged to occur proximate to transit to improve mobility options.

At the other end of the age spectrum, another objective is to encourage an adequate supply of housing for young adults/millennials and young families. This might include smaller homes, multifamily housing, townhome, patio home, small lot, mixed use housing, or other housing options. Housing options should include a variety of price points as well to accommodate young professionals and first time homebuyers. These should be located at locations that are walkable to shopping, dining, entertainment, and employment, and/or are convenient to transit. The provision of such housing will help support the recruitment of young talent sought by Cary's leading employers, and is thus important for Cary's economic health.

Policy 3: Provide for More Housing Options in New Neighborhoods

Provide a greater variety of housing types within new residential neighborhoods. Housing options/variety can take the form of different sized lots, different sized homes, different price points, different types of homes, and different types of home features, such as housing designs that support aging seniors or multi-generational households.

The intent of this policy is to make available an increased mix of housing options in developing parts of town. The increased housing mix might be provided either within individual developments or within multiple proximate developments which together create a diverse housing mix. For many years, this has been the traditional pattern in Cary, and is exemplified in many well-known Cary communities, such as Kildaire Farms, Lochmere, and Cary Park. The objective of this policy is to encourage a mix of housing types within neighborhoods that can accommodate a variety of different types of households. This will help enable Cary's households to grow and age within their own neighborhoods by providing opportunities to change housing types while maintaining their neighborhood ties and social networks. For example, a neighborhood could provide "starter" housing options for singles and younger families, as well as opportunities to later "move up" to other housing types within the same neighborhood. Similarly, a neighborhood should offer housing options for downsizing empty-nesters, seniors, or retirees, so that they can continue to live within their own community.

Policy	Policy Intent
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Policy 4: Provide the Greatest Variety of Housing Options in Mixed Use Centers	
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<p>Provide the greatest variety of housing types and densities within Destination Centers, Commercial Mixed Use Centers, and Employment Mixed Use Centers as designated by the Future Growth Framework, as well as within Downtown Cary. The mix of housing types could include apartments, condominiums, and live/work units over office and retail; separate apartment complexes and courtyard apartments; townhomes; patio homes; and small multi-family units such as fourplexes, triplexes, and duplexes.</p>	<p>The intent of this policy is to recognize and accommodate the housing preferences of Cary citizens who desire to live proximate to shopping, amenities, employment, and/or transit, and arranged in a compact and walkable development environment. This market segment notably includes a sizable proportion of young professionals, singles, couples without children, and seniors or empty-nesters. Many of these residents are willing to trade home size for location, convenience, more neighborhood activity, and their desired types of housing.</p> <p>The objective of this policy is to have a greater concentration and variety of housing types (other than conventional single family) within mixed use developments (Destination, Commercial Mixed Use and Employment Mixed Use Centers) than would be found elsewhere in Cary. In addition, within these locations the highest-density housing should be sited closest to transit stops, shopping and services, and/or office buildings/employment, to place the greatest number of residents within the shortest walking distances of key destinations. Recognizing that land and redevelopment costs may be higher in these centers than elsewhere in Cary, another objective of this policy is to support the housing products and densities at these locations that allow the market to realize the vision for vibrant centers.</p>
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Policy 5: Support Residential Development on Infill and Redevelopment Sites	
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<p>Support residential development on infill and redevelopment sites that is designed to acknowledge the surrounding context, while supporting other LIVE policies.</p>	<p>The intent of this policy is to support and encourage the development of residential infill and redevelopment sites using designs that complement and/or transition to adjacent neighborhoods and residences. The development of these sites should be consistent with, and help to support, Cary’s other LIVE policies – including maintaining neighborhood character and improving the mix of housing stock. This policy acknowledges and accommodates the fact that in the coming years, new development in Cary will increasingly occur on infill or redevelopment sites, as the amount of “greenfield” developable land at Cary’s periphery steadily diminishes.</p> <p>Development of sites located within or adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods should be “context-sensitive” and be compatible with or transition to neighboring properties. This might be addressed via any one of a number of a project’s attributes, including: housing type, building mass, setbacks, landscaping, views, the use of natural features and topography, density, limiting traffic impacts, or other development standards. Examples of compatible designs are provided at the end of this chapter in “Creating Compatible Residential Development Using Context Sensitive Designs.”</p> <p>However, the desire for development that serves to complement or transition to the surrounding neighborhood should also be balanced with LIVE policies. For example, there may be cases where the desire for complementary designs may be deemed less important than objectives related to improving property values or encouraging reinvestment in a distressed neighborhood.</p> <p>Recognizing that development costs may be higher in infill and redevelopment contexts, another objective of this policy is to support an increase in development intensity (compared to adjacent areas) when necessary for project viability, while also seeking to achieve compatibility with neighboring properties. An example of a context where encouraging reinvestment may be a priority is single family homes that front major road corridors that have been widened over time. Due to the challenges these properties face, these areas may be good candidates for a change of use, such as higher density housing, to best utilize the lot and prime access from a major thoroughfare, and discourage disinvestment that could occur if the property were limited to a single-family use.</p>
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Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 6: Encourage and Support the Provision of Affordable Dwellings

Reflect and build on Cary's past practices to encourage and support the provision of affordable dwellings, particularly in response to the changing needs of Cary's families in the coming years.

Cary's 5-Year Consolidated Plan for HUD (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development) provides much more detail regarding affordable housing goals, objectives, and programs. The 5-Year Plan is incorporated into this Community Plan, and can be found in the Appendix.

¹ CDBG - The federal Community Development Block Grant Program is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Cary is a CDBG Entitled Community, and receives an annual affordable housing grant allocation from HUD.

² Federal guidelines define affordable owner-occupied housing as being for individuals and families earning between 60% and 80% of area median income, and affordable rental housing as being for individuals and families earning up to 60% of the area median income.

The Intent of this policy is to reflect Cary's long-standing practices and policies for the provision of affordable dwellings, and to build on and grow those programs and efforts in the coming years, in response to changing needs over time. This policy is therefore rooted in the goals and objectives of Cary's 2000 and 2010 Affordable Housing Plans, as well as the goals and objectives of Cary's CDBG Annual Action Plans and 5-Year Consolidated Plans.¹ The objectives of this Policy therefore include, but are not limited to:

1. Promote the preservation and rehabilitation of the town's existing affordable housing stock.
2. Facilitate the creation of a reasonable proportion of the Town of Cary's housing as affordable ownership units and rental units.²
3. Proactively and cooperatively facilitate and support the creation of new affordable housing units by private, nonprofit, and nongovernmental entities, including funding or financing assistance for projects, support for tax credit projects, regulatory assistance, public-private partnerships or agreements, or other.
4. Provide, enable, or encourage direct support for individuals and families in need of affordable housing. Such support might include homeownership training, first-time homeowner assistance and special financing programs, housing information resources, housing counseling, and/or other, and be provided by either governmental or non-governmental entities/non-profits.
5. Strive for innovation and partnerships in the creation of model ordinances, policies, programs, and development projects aimed at providing affordable housing opportunities.
6. Leverage and target affordable housing funding and efforts to support neighborhood revitalization efforts.
7. Distribute affordable housing units equitably across town, and avoid excessive concentration of units in individual neighborhoods.
8. Strive to locate new affordable units within close proximity (walking distance) to shopping and daily conveniences, employment opportunities, and/or schools, and where possible within walking distance of transit service.
9. Where a significant amount of affordable housing is lost due to redevelopment or conversion to other uses, the Town may direct its affordable housing funds towards minimizing the impacts of the residents who are displaced and/or towards the replacement of the affordable housing units lost.
10. Assure a quality living environment and access to public amenities for all residents, regardless of income.

How We Will Achieve our Vision

1 Implement a Strong Neighborhoods Initiative

Major Actions:

- Create a baseline housing inventory and neighborhoods assessment to develop a neighborhoods health report.
- Work with neighborhoods to explore development of a formal mechanism for communicating neighborhood interests and concerns to Town officials.
- Amend the Land Development Ordinance to include context-sensitive infill and redevelopment standards.
- Expand the framework of what is now called Project Phoenix to include an interdepartmental task force that examines whether the Project Phoenix model could be expanded to include issues related to community development, code enforcement, and minimum housing. The interdepartmental task force could also examine whether data collected through Project Phoenix could be used to promote and direct community renewal activity.
- Expand the funding and scope of the Neighborhood Improvement Program.



A Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) was established by the City of San José, California, and partner organizations to strengthen the city's neighborhoods by building clean, safe and strong neighborhoods with independent, capable, and sustainable neighborhood organizations. By coordinating and combining resources, the Initiative is helping neighborhoods reach their full potential as highly livable communities.

2 Expand Housing Choices

Major Actions:

- Create a Cary task force to collaborate with employers and other stakeholders on the development of workforce housing. The median sales price for homes in Cary as of December 2016 was \$320,750. At this level, many occupational groups are effectively priced out of the residential real estate market in Cary. To further the economic development of the Town, available and attainable housing options are necessary to attract and retain a range of workers. The role of the task force would be to review available housing options in the area and to collaborate with other local employers and organizations to consider ways to increase the amount of housing available at attainable prices.
- Tie general fund support of community investment and housing to a fixed formula based on the age of the housing stock, population growth and/or amount of CDBG funds received. Continue to operate as a revolving fund.
- Develop new zoning districts and/or development incentives to accommodate new housing options/trends such as co-housing arrangements, small apartment buildings, tiny

houses, cottage homes, and accessory dwelling units.

- Initiate/participate in intergovernmental efforts to increase revenue support for funding affordable housing.
- Consider prioritizing existing publicly-owned surplus land for affordable housing developments; land-bank appropriate sites.



Southern Village, located in Chapel Hill, is an excellent example of a community's resolve to provide housing choices within a single cohesive and well-designed development. This mixed use planned community offers a variety of housing options and price points within one very walkable development: second story apartments over commercial retail, condominiums, townhouses, and single-family detached housing.



A complete neighborhood is an area where residents have safe and convenient access to goods and services they need on a daily or regular basis. This includes a range of housing options, grocery stores and other neighborhood-serving commercial services; quality public schools; public open spaces and recreational facilities; and access to frequent transit. In a complete neighborhood, the network of streets and sidewalks is interconnected, which makes walking and bicycling to these places safe and relatively easy for people of all ages and abilities.

Creating Compatible Residential Development Using Context Sensitive Designs

For decades, the Town of Cary has focused on ensuring a high quality of development through design guidelines, site design standards, and development regulations. While these standards and regulations primarily address new greenfield development, they do also address infill and redevelopment situations to a degree.

The Town’s *Site Design Standards Manual* is the Town’s main guide for ensuring high quality developments are achieved in Cary. One of the most important statements made in this manual with respect to infill and redevelopment is:

“One of the most effective ways to meet the Site Design Standards is to design with a site’s context in mind.”

Among the seven key design principles that the Manual was developed to achieve is “Providing Transitions” between uses using a variety of techniques: architectural designs, building massing, building heights, land uses, buffers, and other design strategies. While the majority of design guidance is more targeted to non-residential development, the Manual does provide some guidance with respect to how new residential development should provide transitions to adjacent established residential lots.

The following examples illustrate examples of “good” compatible infill and redevelopment within established neighborhoods and “bad” examples that are not contextually compatible with the established design and layout of residential developments.

Compatibility is defined here to mean that the design of new infill or redeveloped homes are in visual harmony with the surrounding context, not that these homes are the same exact type of housing, or look exactly the same.

Note to Reader: This section focuses on context sensitive designs in existing neighborhoods using infill development and redevelopment. For examples of how entire developments can use transitions to create buffers between different uses and development intensities, see Design Concepts for Transitions Between Centers and Neighborhoods in Chapter 4: SHOP.

GOOD INFILL DESIGNS: SINGLE FAMILY HOMES



The examples above from Denver, Colorado, and Fredericksburg, Virginia, illustrate good examples of infill development within an established residential neighborhood. Both homes are designed using similar setbacks, building massing, and building heights to ensure compatibility with adjacent homes. And the homes use similar architectural features such as porches and columns.

- ① Common building heights
- ② Compatible front yard setbacks
- ③ Architectural compatibility

**BAD INFILL DESIGNS:
SINGLE FAMILY HOMES**



The examples shown here illustrate poor examples of infill development within an established residential neighborhood, and the critical importance of building massing, building heights, and architectural designs to create (or not create in this case) compatibility within the neighborhood.

- ① Incompatible building heights
- ② Architecturally incompatible



**MULTIFAMILY THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH
ADJACENT SINGLE FAMILY HOMES**



These examples from Portsmouth, Virginia, Fredericksburg, Virginia, and Denver, Colorado, illustrate how multifamily homes can be designed to be compatible within a primarily single-family neighborhood. The first two examples were developed as part of master planned developments that mix multifamily and single family homes. The last example shows an example of an infill multifamily home built within an existing single family neighborhood.

- ① Compatible building heights
- ② Architectural compatibility

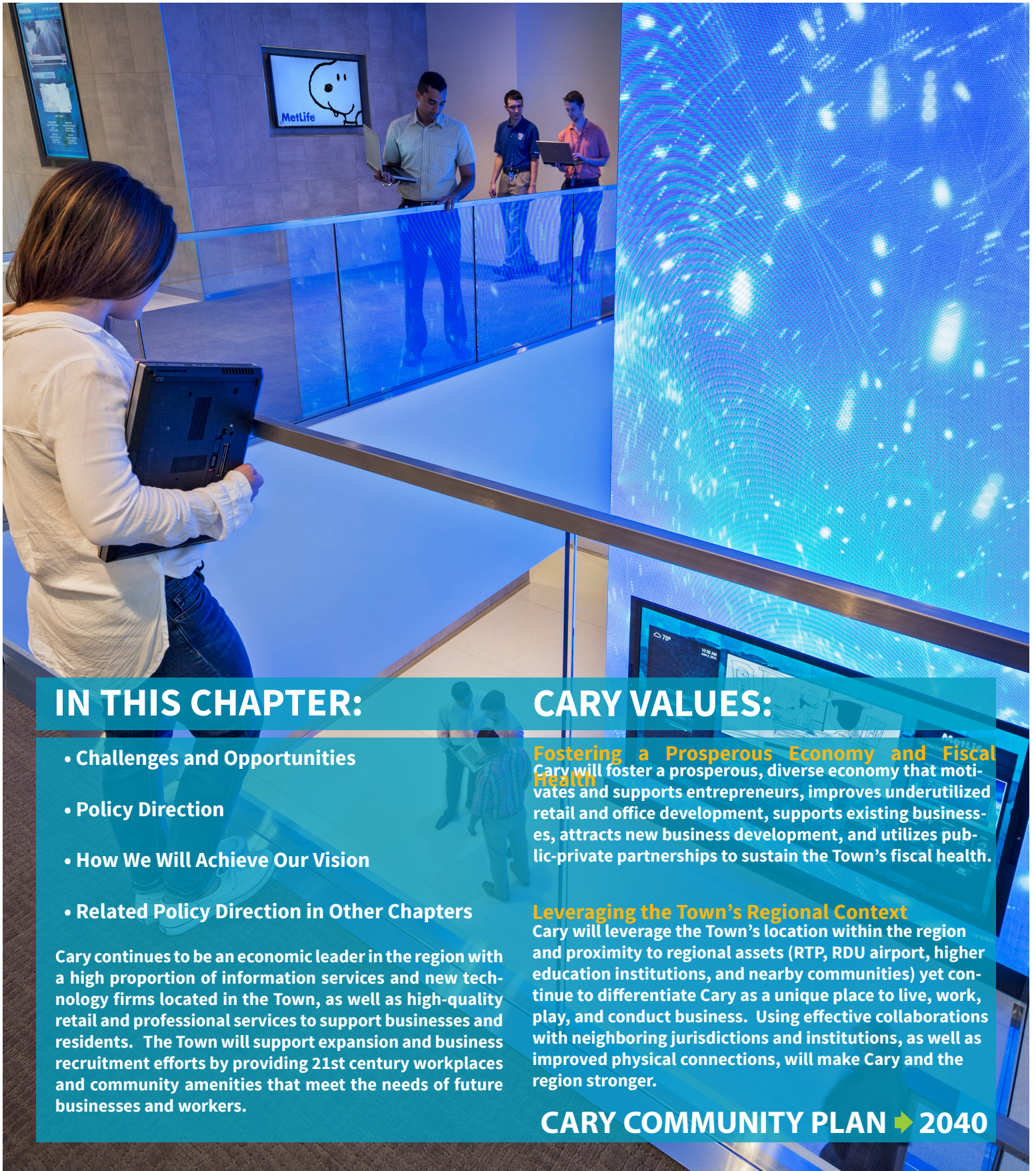
Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

This plan has been organized to address specific topics in specific chapters; however, the policies listed throughout this plan are very much interrelated. Listed here are the policies included in other plan chapters that relate to the Town’s housing and neighborhood policies.

	Work:	Shop:	Engage:	Shape:	Move:	Serve:
	Assuring Continued Prosperity	Creating Vibrant Destinations	Experiencing the Cary Community	Guiding Community Growth	Providing Transportation Choices	Meeting Community Needs
<p>Live:</p> <p>Fostering Strong Neighborhoods</p>	<p>Policy #1: Grow A Sustainable and Diversifying Workforce</p> <p>Policy #2: Enhance Locational Appeal to Businesses and Workers</p>		<p>Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan Goal #2</p> <p>Public Art Master Plan Vision</p>	<p>Policy #1: Distribute Commercial Centers, Mixed-Use Centers, and Destination Centers Across Town</p> <p>Policy #2: Focus the Most Intense Types of Development in Strategic Locations</p> <p>Policy #3: Encourage Mixed-Use Development</p> <p>Policy #4: Support and Facilitate Redevelopment and Infill Development</p> <p>Policy #5: Support the Revitalization of Targeted Development Corridors</p> <p>Policy #6: Provide Appropriate Transitions Between Land Uses</p> <p>Policy #8: Preserve and Maintain Cary’s Attractive Appearance and Quality of Development</p>	<p>Policy #2: Apply Multimodal Street Designs</p> <p>Policy #3: Design Transportation Infrastructure to Address Land Use Context</p> <p>Policy #4: Focus Investments on Improving Connections and Closing Gaps</p> <p>Policy #5: Minimize Thoroughfare Widths</p> <p>Policy #8: Ensure a Well-Maintained System</p>	<p>Policy #1: Provide Affordable and High Quality Public Services and Facilities for Current and Future Generations</p> <p>Policy #2: Provide Safe, Reliable Water and Wastewater Services</p> <p>Policy #4: Ensure Long-Term, Cost-Effective, and Environmentally-Responsible Disposal of Waste</p> <p>Policy #6: Protect Air Quality</p> <p>Policy #11: Support Expansive and Cutting-Edge Information Technology Infrastructure</p> <p>Policy #12: Provide Exemplary and Timely Emergency Services</p>

3. WORK

Assuring Continued Prosperity



IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Challenges and Opportunities
- Policy Direction
- How We Will Achieve Our Vision
- Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

Cary continues to be an economic leader in the region with a high proportion of information services and new technology firms located in the Town, as well as high-quality retail and professional services to support businesses and residents. The Town will support expansion and business recruitment efforts by providing 21st century workplaces and community amenities that meet the needs of future businesses and workers.

CARY VALUES:

Fostering a Prosperous Economy and Fiscal Health
Cary will foster a prosperous, diverse economy that motivates and supports entrepreneurs, improves underutilized retail and office development, supports existing businesses, attracts new business development, and utilizes public-private partnerships to sustain the Town's fiscal health.

Leveraging the Town's Regional Context
Cary will leverage the Town's location within the region and proximity to regional assets (RTP, RDU airport, higher education institutions, and nearby communities) yet continue to differentiate Cary as a unique place to live, work, play, and conduct business. Using effective collaborations with neighboring jurisdictions and institutions, as well as improved physical connections, will make Cary and the region stronger.

3. WORK

Challenges and Opportunities

Regional Marketplace

According to a survey of local businesses, nearly 40% of the businesses in our community located here because of our central location and access to a growing regional market. The Raleigh-Durham region has close to 2.0 million people. Incomes are increasing along with the region's employment base. Being at the center of this growing market, with direct access to Raleigh-Durham International Airport and the Research Triangle Park, provides unprecedented opportunities for business growth and development. Efforts to enhance economic growth for the region are likely to have positive spin-offs for Cary because of our Town's central location. Given our location in the region, the Town is in the enviable position of being able to define the type and scale of growth that we can accommodate. However, Cary is still part of a regional market, and retail, office, or other businesses that serve the local market must compete with a growing number of commercial centers, office parks, and mixed use projects in the region. In order to compete successfully in this regional market, Cary has – and must continue to – strategically differentiate and distinguish its overall built environment, community appeal, and business climate from those of its neighbors.

Strong Local Economy

Economic Diversity

Cary has a relatively diverse economic base, with six industry sectors each having more than 10% of the job base. Information Services is the largest employment sector in Cary, accounting for 20% (or one-fifth) of all jobs located in Cary. Retail trade is the second-largest in Cary, accounting for 16% of all jobs. Many of the retail jobs are concentrated in shopping centers like Cary Towne Center Mall, Crossroads, Crescent Commons, or in smaller shopping centers. There is a growing retail concentration within the Downtown area, and the limited stock of Downtown retail, dining and entertainment has been identified by some as a challenge to business recruitment and resident satisfaction. Professional, scientific, and technical services constitutes the third largest industry within Cary, with 13% of all jobs in the Town. This sector incorporates a broad range of businesses engaged in engineering, research and development, consulting and other activities.



The Research Triangle Park (RTP) has spurred development of the region for decades. A concept design from the new Master Plan for RTP, shown above, is indicative of shifts in development models to create mixed use, walkable centers in the Triangle Region. Cary has an opportunity to evolve with the region and compete within the larger market while also differentiating the Town's business environment and workplace offerings from other communities.

While Cary's economy is diverse, the largest employment sector, Information Services, account for 1 out of 5 jobs in Cary. There is a significant dependence on the information services sector, especially because an economic downturn in that sector would not only impact Cary families dependent on information service jobs, but also other businesses that support information service businesses and families. Understanding the locational needs of target industries is a critical first step in maintaining the Town's unique cluster of information service businesses and in continuing to diversify economic growth in Cary.

Large Proportion of Middle-Age Workers

Over the years, Cary's central location and high-quality business and residential areas have helped attract corporate offices and technology companies offering well-paying jobs for highly-skilled professionals and middle- and senior-level executives. As a result, middle-age workers account for nearly three-quarters of Cary's workforce, as compared with less than 50% of the region's. While this has provided a boon to Cary's economy, the under-representation of young professionals in Cary could be a stumbling-block to future economic growth and business recruitment. Firms that rely on an adequate supply of young creative and technical talent, such as those in many technology sectors, may bypass locations in Cary in favor of communities having more young professionals. There is the opportunity to further diversify the local industry and employment mix to include more well-paying jobs for younger workers, and to position the Town to attract more young professionals and families to live and work in Cary.

Maintaining Attractiveness to Prospective Businesses

Cary is well-known as a community that offers a very high quality of life for its residents and workers. That quality of life is created in part by the many public and private amenities offered in the community, such as beautiful parks and greenways, recreation activities, access to first-rate health care, and abundant choices for shopping, dining, and services. Our high quality of life is also often defined in terms of our Town's aesthetics, attention to community appearance, and the high quality of public and private development in our community. In fact, our community's development regulations set high standards for the quality and appearance of new development.

Historically, Cary's major employers – as well as new large businesses relocating to Cary – have recognized the value and costs of meeting Cary's rigorous development standards, in order to sustain and reinforce the prestige of their companies' Cary locations. However, as our community also comes to recognize the importance of nurturing entrepreneurship and growing small businesses, we may need to evaluate the ability of small businesses to meet our community's stringent development quality and design standards. The impact of such regulations hits hardest on small businesses, where the proportional cost and effort of meeting Cary's aesthetic standards may be beyond their financial reach and expertise. In the coming years, our community may need to balance aspects of our aesthetic standards, in order to ensure that we continue to attract and grow small businesses in Cary.

Changes in Workplace Environments

Cary has been extremely successful in attracting corporate and technology-based businesses to its lush, well-planned office parks. Many businesses continue to seek such locations, especially where they are located near high-quality residential neighborhoods like the ones that Cary has to offer.

At the same time, the workplace environment is shifting for some industries that are trying to attract today's younger and more mobile professional, who chooses a job partly based on the type of lifestyle offered by the employer. That lifestyle includes both the immediate urban environment in which the business is located, as well as the character of the overall community. A setting that offers "urban amenity" value has become more important to nearly 40% of Cary's employers, according to a 2013 survey. To many of today's younger and more mobile workers, isolated locations in traditional suburban office parks are proving to be less attractive than business locations in more urban environments that offer a mix of nearby dining, shopping, and living options in a walkable community. In order to remain a competitive location for 21st Century businesses and workers, our community may need to ensure that we offer the types of locations and built environments that will enable us to successfully compete for businesses that recruit this younger or more mobile workforce.



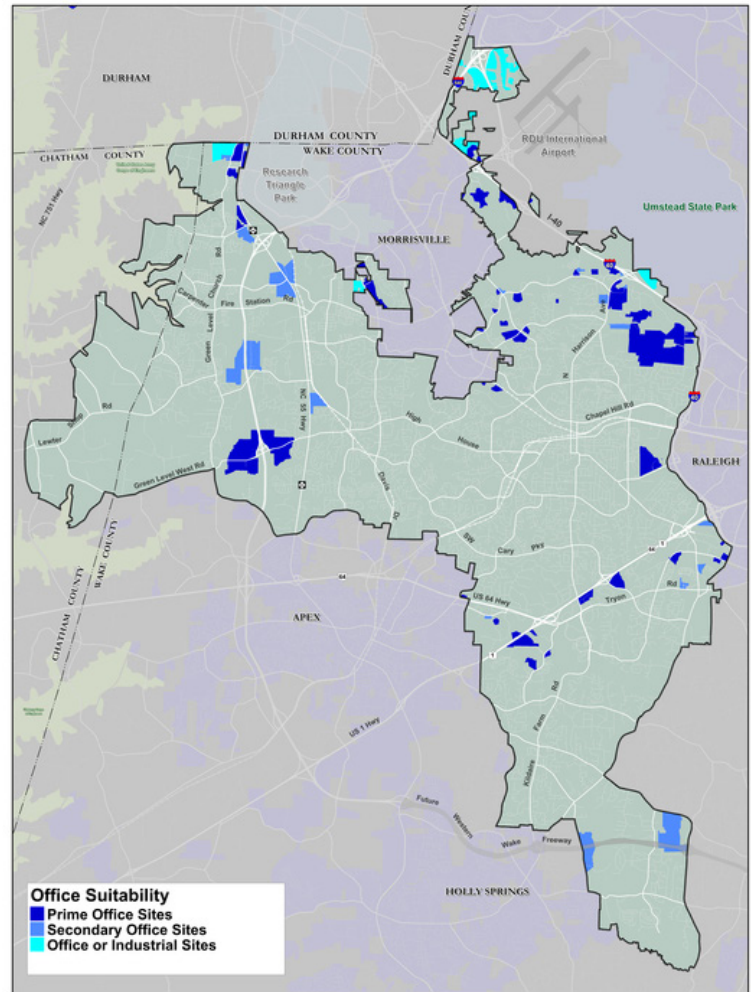
Many businesses throughout the nation are moving from traditional suburban business parks to downtown locations that offer an urban lifestyle and urban amenities. A regional example is Red Hat's relocation in 2013 from the NC State Centennial Campus to downtown Raleigh.

Limited Remaining Class A Office Space

Of the total remaining developable land within Cary's planning boundary, it is estimated that about 1,400 acres might be suitable for prime "Class A" office. While this may seem like a significant amount of land, there are two key challenges. First, many of these parcels are not currently available on the market. For example, about 400 of the 1,400 acres are owned or controlled by SAS or its development arm, for future expansion of the SAS Campus. Second, the number of large sites is very limited. Excluding the undeveloped SAS properties, there are only 9 sites of 20 or more acres, and only 21 sites of 10-20 acres suitable for prime office within the entire planning area. There are therefore very few remaining premier sites in Cary's planning jurisdiction for major businesses looking to locate to the area, which could be a significant limitation for future economic development efforts. As the Town grows, it is critical to monitor and protect these prime sites for future employment growth and business recruitment, and not convert them to residential or commercial uses.

Supporting Telecommuting and Internet-Based Businesses

The Town of Cary has long supported the expansion of internet-based businesses and telecommuting by striving to provide premium broad band infrastructure. Recent developments, including AT&T's and Google's high-speed fiber optic internet services soon to be established within Cary and the Triangle Region, will greatly advance the capabilities of these types of businesses. Over time, the Town will need to monitor infrastructure needs and implement evolving technological advancements to maintain its competitive edge.



Cary's inventory of developable land suitable for office and industrial development (shown above as of 2015) is diminishing over time. And very few of these sites are premier locations for new businesses looking to locate within the region. To stay competitive, Cary must reserve its few remaining Class A office spaces and premier industrial locations for new business development.

Policy Direction

In order to respond to the economic challenges and opportunities facing Cary, including maintaining a strong and diverse local economy and providing a variety of employment options in Town, the Town of Cary's employment policies are:

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 1: Grow A Sustainable and Diversifying Workforce

Support the growth of a sustainable and diverse workforce that meets the needs of Cary's businesses over time, and that supports and attracts future economic growth.

The intent of this policy is to facilitate the continued growth of the Town's local economy by ensuring that our businesses have access to the type of diverse labor force and professional talent that meets their changing needs over time. An objective of this policy is therefore to create a sustainable workforce for the local economy – one that includes a variety of skill sets, ages, and career stages. Growing a diverse workforce will require housing, transportation, shopping, and recreational options that meet the needs of the 21st century workforce.

Policy 2: Enhance Locational Appeal to Businesses and Workers

Maintain or enhance Cary's locational appeal to businesses and workers. This includes providing a quality of life and a built environment that appeals to, and attracts, both businesses/employers and the workforce of tomorrow.

The intent of this policy is to proactively address the changing nature of the types of workplace locations and environments that are increasingly being sought by office employers, as well as by young professionals. In order to remain a competitive location for 21st Century businesses and workers, a key objective is to provide the types of locations and built environments in our community that will enable us to successfully compete for both the businesses and the workers of today and tomorrow. For example, by encouraging the growth of vibrant and walkable mixed use centers that promote live, work, play environments. This policy is complemented by Policies 8, 10, and 12.

Policy 3: Retain and Grow Existing Cary Businesses

Focus attention on retaining core businesses that are already located in Cary, and support and encourage the local growth of those businesses.

The intent of this policy is to recognize that the presence of existing businesses in Cary is of vital importance to the community, as is the economic growth of those businesses. A key objective of the policy is to retain firms and jobs that are already located in Cary, and to not lose them to other localities. Another objective is to encourage the growth of existing Cary businesses, including local job growth. The Town's role should be based on building partnerships with the local business community and business development partners, to facilitate regular and frequent coordination and collaboration. Such coordination might include things such as:

- Collaboratively identifying and prioritizing capital improvements and changes to facilities or services that might have the most positive impact on retention and growth.
- Collaboratively evaluating and identifying Town regulations and programs that help support retention and growth.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 4: Diversify Cary’s Economy

Support development of an increasingly diverse economy through the targeted recruitment or growth of selected under-represented industries, in coordination with regional partners.

The intent of this policy is to increase the diversity of Cary’s economic base, in order to make the community more economically resilient to unforeseen downturns in different market sectors. Secondly, this policy also supports diversification of the regional Triangle economy, in order to make our region, as a whole, more economically resilient.

Policy 5: Attract New, High Value Businesses

Attract new businesses that provide a high quality-of-life business culture and higher than average wages relative to the business’s industry.

The intent of this policy is to focus local business recruitment efforts on targeted businesses that pay higher than average wages relative to the business’s industry nationwide. This may also have the effect of also focusing on the premier businesses within any given industrial sector. Another intent of this policy is that focusing on industries that pay higher-than-average wages can help to support the growth of the Town’s fiscal base, which can in turn help to support the types of public services and facilities to bolster the Town’s locational appeal.

Policy 6: Attract and Nurture Small Businesses

Prioritize, promote, and commit to a supportive regulatory, programmatic, and investment environment to attract and nurture small businesses and start-ups, and to support the growth of existing small businesses.

The intent of this policy is to encourage and support the development of new small businesses, and the expansion of existing small businesses. In order to realize the objectives of this policy, it is anticipated that the Town will work closely with the Cary Chamber of Commerce and other cooperative entities. A key objective of this policy is to create a local regulatory, programmatic, and business environment that is supportive of small businesses. The overall aim is that the local regulatory and business environment should first avoid creating undue barriers to market entry and market expansion for small enterprises, and second help to support the growth of those businesses.

Policy 7: Ensure the Economic Growth and Vitality of Downtown

Ensure the economic growth and vitality of Downtown Cary by continuing to invest in and support development of a vibrant town center where residents live, work, and play.

The intent of this policy is to show strong support for the continued growth and enhancement of Downtown Cary. As the “heart and soul” of Cary, Downtown is a key community amenity that has impacts on locational appeal to new businesses, business recruitment efforts, and the quality of life provided in Cary. Continued reinvestment, public-private partnerships, and improvements to the built environment area a priority for maintaining a competitive edge in an increasingly competitive regional market.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 8: Support the Locational Needs of New and Expanding Firms

Support new and expanding firms that have different locational needs. Provide a variety of places, including modern business park developments with prime office and industrial spaces, mixed use employment centers, and Downtown Cary.

The intent of this policy addresses the evolving regional and national market for office development, and the locational needs of different business sectors. There is no one-size-fits-all in terms of locational needs for new and expanding firms. This policy supports decisions to provide a variety of employment sites and locations: modern business parks, mixed use employment centers, commercial mixed use and destination centers, and office development within Downtown Cary. This policy also supports ensuring that adequate land is available to develop employment uses in a variety of locations. New developments should be evaluated for the opportunity to incorporate employment uses.

This policy is complemented by Policies 2, 10, and 12.

Policy 9: Promote High Quality Education

Strengthen and support local access to a comprehensive range of high-quality educational opportunities as an important part of Cary's brand and identity.

The intent of this policy is to recognize the impact that access to high quality education has on local business recruitment efforts and attracting new workers to Cary. This policy encourages efforts to grow and strengthen the quality, capacity, and accessibility of local educational offerings. The policy applies to all types and levels of education: public and private, K-12, college, graduate education, and specialized professional and technical education and training. This policy recognizes the importance of both local and regional approaches, involving not only the Town, but also local and regional governments and agencies, the state, and the business community, working in cooperation.

Policy 10: Reserve and Provide Employment Sites in Selected Commercial Mixed Use and Destination Centers

Reserve and provide sites for employment and economic development opportunities within a targeted set of new or existing mixed use commercial developments and Destination Centers, as well as within Downtown Cary.

The intent of this policy is to address office tenant preference trends for mixed use, walkable environments. This policy supports the inclusion of office and employment uses as being a key and essential element within new Commercial Mixed Use and Destination Centers as identified on the Future Growth Framework map, as well as within Downtown Cary.

This policy is complemented by Policies 2, 8, and 12.

Policy 11: Reserve and Provide Employment Sites in Traditional Office Parks

Reserve and provide sites for employment and economic development—especially for major industries or employers—within Cary's existing traditional suburban office parks and industrial areas.

The intent of this policy is to address the limited supply of land available for Class A and B office and industrial spaces within Cary's existing office and industrial parks. This policy recognizes that certain types of employers and industries will continue to require locations in such parks, rather than in Employment Mixed Use Campuses or Commercial Mixed Use Centers. The key objective of this policy is to ensure that a sufficient number of prime sites are reserved for such industries, rather than being converted to other uses.

Policy

Policy Intent

Policy 12: Transform Selected Office Parks into Employment Mixed Use Campuses

Incorporate commercial and housing uses into selected traditional office parks and industrial areas, evolving them into employment mixed use campuses. Parks and centers selected to evolve into Employment Mixed Use Campuses should reserve prime opportunities for the development of Class A Office space.

The intent of this policy is to support the evolution of a select number of traditional business and industrial parks into Employment Mixed Use Campuses as defined on the Future Growth Framework map. Infill and redevelopment in these categories should include commercial, office, and residential uses organized as vertical mixed use (multi-story) or horizontal mixed use (separate buildings in close proximity), arranged in a walkable pattern with an active pedestrian realm where buildings front streets. The intent is to provide new employment campuses that offer a full-range of amenities and services within a walkable urban framework.

As parks evolve into Employment Mixed Use Campuses, it will be important to maintain premier sites for Class A office space and other employment uses, and not to convert these premier sites to residential or commercial uses.

This policy is complemented by Policies 2, 8, and 10.

***Design Guidance:** Examples of successful transitions between commercial or mixed use developments and residential neighborhoods can be found in the Design Concepts for Transitions Between Centers and Neighborhoods in Chapter 4: SHOP. These concepts can also be applied when creating transitions between office and employment developments and neighborhoods.*

How We Will Achieve our Vision

1 Foster a Resilient Economic Base and Diverse Workforce

Major Actions:

- Study and identify business sectors with the greatest promise for diversifying our economic base; focus recruitment efforts accordingly.
- Amend Cary's Land Development Ordinance and design guidelines to support the evolution of selected business and industrial parks to transform into Employment Mixed-Use campuses.
- Implement the policy initiatives in Chapter 2: LIVE that will promote the development of housing options that are affordable and appealing to a diverse workforce.

2 Create a Business-Friendly Environment

Major Actions:

- Create and develop initiatives in concert with the Chamber of Commerce to support the creation and growth of small businesses, e.g. a small-business loan program, expansion of the façade improvement program, incubator space, etc.
- Expand the role and make-up of the Economic Development Commission to review and identify improvements to ordinances, policies, fee schedules, and programs that would foster a business-supportive environment.
- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to proactively maintain a relationship with major employees, i.e. CEO roundtable, to identify cooperative efforts to improve the business climate. The CEO roundtable should be a working group of business leaders, Chamber of Commerce officials, Town staff, and other relevant stakeholders that meets at regular intervals to keep abreast of new challenges or opportunities.



Shown here are Town of Cary staff, elected officials, and the Cary Chamber of Commerce's executive staff touring sites together in Downtown Winston-Salem as part of the 2014 Cary Council - Staff Retreat.

3 Promote the Economic Growth and Vitality of Downtown

Major Actions:

- Take a leadership role in exploring opportunities for bringing additional transit services downtown, in downtown station area planning, and in increasing regional coverage and connectivity.
- Amend downtown zoning and development ordinances to reflect the downtown special planning area vision.
- Develop marketing collateral to promote development opportunities and successes.



Many new businesses have been locating in Downtown Cary in recent years, such as Pharmacy Bottle + Beverage.

4 Maximize Cary's Locational Appeal

Major Actions:

- Implement the policy initiatives in the LIVE, SHOP, ENGAGE, SHAPE, MOVE, and SERVE chapters.
- Solicit feedback from employees of targeted businesses to identify opportunities for enhancing Cary's national image in order to attract the types of industries and workers critical to Cary's future.
- Strengthen and promote Cary's brand to direct economic recruitment.

Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

This plan has been organized to address specific topics in specific chapters; however, the policies listed throughout this plan are very much interrelated. Listed here are the policies included in other plan chapters that relate to the Town’s economic policies.

Work: Assuring Continued Prosperity	Live: Fostering Strong Neighborhoods	Shop: Creating Vibrant Destinations	Engage: Experiencing the Cary Community	Shape: Guiding Community Growth	Move: Providing Transportation Choices	Serve: Meeting Community Needs
	Policy #2: Provide More Housing Choices for All Residents Policy #4: Provide the Greatest Variety of Housing Options in Mixed Use Centers	Policy #1: Facilitate Redevelopment of Underperforming Shopping Centers Policy #3: Support the Development of a Limited Number of Destination Centers	Parks, Recreation & cultural Resources Master Plan Goals #1, #7 Public Art Master Plan Vision	Policy #2: Focus the Most Intense Types of Development in Strategic Locations Policy #3: Encourage Mixed-Use Development Policy #4: Support and Facilitate Redevelopment and Infill Development Policy #5: Support the Revitalization of Targeted Development Corridors Policy #7: Provide Opportunities for a Limited Set of Non-Residential Uses Outside of Commercial Centers	Policy #4: Focus Investments on Improving Connections and Closing Gaps Policy #7: Target Transit Investments Policy # 8: Ensure a Well-Maintained System	Policy #1: Provide Affordable and High Quality Public Services and Facilities for Current and Future Generations Policy #4: Ensure Long-Term, Cost-Effective, and Environmentally-Responsible Disposal of Waste Policy #6: Protect Air Quality Policy #11: Support Expansive and Cutting-Edge Information Technology Infrastructure

4. SHOP

Creating Vibrant Destinations



IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Challenges and Opportunities
- Policy Direction
- How We Will Achieve Our Vision
- Design Transitions Between Uses
- Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

Like many communities around the nation, much of Cary's commercial spaces were developed at a time when convenience and automobile accessibility were the priorities for commercial center designs. Times have changed, and both younger and older generations crave a new type of shopping and dining experience that is more connected, walkable, and provides engaging public spaces where residents can interact. Cary has an opportunity to retrofit some of its suburban commercial centers into vibrant community destinations that can attract visitors to the Town and provide desired shopping and dining options for local residents.

CARY VALUES:

Managing Future Land Use

Cary will manage land to create a distinctive, attractive, physical environment for our growing and diverse community while maintaining our predominant suburban character. Development should focus on creating and maintaining high-quality commercial areas and strong residential neighborhoods complemented by walkable mixed use activity nodes that serve all age groups.

Encouraging Redevelopment and Infill Efforts

Cary will focus redevelopment efforts on underperforming land and building assets, and focus new infill development on vacant areas that are already served by existing infrastructure. Older declining commercial centers and commercial areas are key redevelopment priorities, and downtown represents a good opportunity to invest in a way that creates an active, walkable mixed use environment which yields greater economic value and is a point of pride for Cary.

4. SHOP

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Changing Retail and Commercial Preferences

Consumer preferences have changed. Ultra-convenient online shopping and the growing demand for unique shopping and dining experiences have had an impact on the way commercial centers are now designed and the types of environments in which they are located. Just as emerging technologies and the post World War II proliferation of the automobile created a shift in the location and design of commercial destinations to suburban contexts, our nation is experiencing the next wave that is driven by consumer preferences for more walkable, mixed use, compact, and vibrant shopping destinations.

While there is still a limited market for traditional strip-commercial development, the growing trend across the nation is development of lifestyle centers that provide walkable urban environments convenient to home and work. These centers contain additional amenities, such as outdoor entertainment venues, outdoor markets, and public art and gathering spaces. Often called “third places,” these new commercial mixed use

destinations provide not only the opportunity to shop and dine in high quality establishments, they also provide the opportunity to gather and interact with other people outside of work and home. And national trends show a growing preference for actually living or working within mixed use environments, particularly for young professionals and to some extent retirees.

Due to these trends, retailers across the nation are expanding into urban markets and are often shrinking the design of stores to better fit these contexts. Niche shopping opportunities, attractions, and service-oriented establishments are growing retail market segments; and many older suburban centers are evolving to provide this new shopping experience.



North Hills Mall in 1984

Since its beginnings in the 1950s, North Hills Mall in Raleigh has evolved from a small strip shopping center, to the Southeast's first enclosed shopping mall, and is now a vibrant lifestyle center. Today, North Hills offers a mix of commercial shopping and dining destinations, offices, housing units, and community event spaces, all within a walkable and engaging environment.



North Hills Converted to a Lifestyle Center in 2010

Aging Commercial Centers

Cary has a wide array of commercial centers, at a variety of sizes and scales serving neighborhood, community, and regional needs, many of which were built decades ago. These centers are located across Cary's planning area and set the locational framework for future commercial development. Today, some of these commercial centers are experiencing vacancies and some may be viewed as having obsolete designs by prospective businesses looking for new commercial space. At the same time, new commercial developments are being developed in Cary that cater to 21st century shopping and dining preferences in both the downtown and walkable suburban locations, such as the Arboretum, Stone Creek Village, and Waverly Place.

While Cary does have a strong local retail market, it is still important to ensure that aging commercial centers evolve over time to remain competitive in the marketplace, and to maintain high build and design quality that protects surrounding neighborhoods from the impacts of decline.

Retail and commercial centers have a typical life cycle of 25 years, at which time significant retrofitting is often needed to maintain market viability. Between now and 2032 the number of commercial centers in Cary that are more than 25 years old will nearly triple. Cary's aging commercial centers represent some of the most important opportunities for commercial infill and redevelopment in town. Since commercial vacancies can lead to blight and abandonment, and have significant impacts on surrounding employment centers and neighborhoods, careful attention will need to be paid to aging or troubled commercial centers.

Redevelopment is much more expensive and challenging to achieve than "greenfield" development on vacant land. In order to make it financially viable to successfully redevelop established commercial centers, project developers will likely need to maximize the use of the site's land by creating more compact development forms, mixing uses, and using higher intensity development to offset the considerable costs of redevelopment.

2.5
million square feet of retail development
was 40 years old or older in 2012

11.2
million square feet of retail development
will be 40 years old or older in 2032

Over the next 20 years, the number of commercial establishments that are 25 years or older will nearly triple, changing the development context in Cary to one that focuses primarily on infill and redevelopment.

Demand for More Commercial Options

As evidenced through community surveys, Cary's growing population and local economy are increasing the demand for new types of retail businesses, dining establishments, and commercial services that are not yet offered in Cary, particularly within downtown. Residents and workers want more unique, distinctive, and authentic choices for dining and entertainment, including park-once-and-walk environments that offer vibrant public spaces. Downtown was identified as an area where there is high demand for attractions and shopping locations. (See also the Downtown Special Planning Area.) The redevelopment of aging commercial centers is also another opportunity to provide new shopping and dining opportunities and unique commercial "experiences."



Elizabeth's Home and Garden Shop on Chatham Street in Downtown Cary (above) and Cary's Waverly Place Commercial Center (below) are examples of downtown and suburban community shopping establishments that offer the types of environments and shopping experiences that customers in Cary desire.

Demand for High Quality Destination Centers with Character

Cary's high quality built environment is widely known and is largely comprised of suburban scale commercial centers and shopping malls of various sizes and scales. What is currently under-represented in Cary are high quality, mixed use destination centers that can draw customers from across the region to visit unique venues and shopping and dining establishments. High quality destination centers often include signature elements such as entertainment venues, gathering spaces, fountains, unique architecture, and memorable public art installations. The mixing of uses that can occur in these destination centers often create active and inviting public environments both during the day and at night that offer true live, work, play experiences.



FUTURE GROWTH FRAMEWORK

Chapter 6: SHAPE, sets out a framework to guide Cary’s future growth and development. The framework includes a Future Growth Framework Map that specifies the locations where ten broad development categories apply within Cary’s planning area. That framework includes three development categories for future commercial and mixed use development: Commercial Centers, Commercial Mixed Use Centers, and Destination Centers. This page provides an overview of those categories, while Chapter 6 provides more detailed descriptions.

Commercial Center

Character

Traditional commercial center that serves daily retail and service needs of nearby neighborhoods. Typically located at major street intersections, commercial centers are designed to maximize convenience by accommodating proximate parking near stores, typically along the front or side of the commercial center. Centers should be walkable and connect to adjacent developments. Commercial centers may also include office space and residential uses such as townhomes and multifamily. Uses may be mixed horizontally (on adjacent sites or buildings) or vertically (within buildings), and are typically served by surface parking lots.

Building Heights

1-3 stories



Commercial Mixed Use Center

Character

Prominent commercial mixed use center that includes an integrated mix of commercial/retail, office, and higher-density residential, such as multifamily and townhomes. The center should include a significant amount of vertically-mixed buildings, having ground floor retail or office uses, and offices and housing on upper floors. Urban designs frame the street with multi-story buildings and active public spaces.

Building Heights

4-6 stories, transitioning down to adjacent single-family neighborhoods



Destination Center

Character

High density mixed use regional destination center that may include special uses, such as a prominent and unique entertainment venue. The center includes an integrated mix of commercial/retail, office, and higher-density residential, such as multifamily. The center should be characterized by vertically-mixed buildings having ground floor retail or office, with offices and housing on upper floors. Urban designs frame the street with multistory buildings and active public spaces.

Building Heights

7+ stories, transitioning down to adjacent single-family neighborhoods or other less intensive developments



POLICY DIRECTION

In order to respond to the shopping and mixed use challenges and opportunities facing Cary, including providing high quality, mixed use, and pedestrian-oriented commercial destinations of various scales that are well-integrated into the existing urban fabric of the community, the Town of Cary’s *Shop* policies are:

Policy	Policy Intent
Policy 1: Facilitate Redevelopment of Underperforming Commercial Centers	
<p>Facilitate the redevelopment and revitalization of Cary’s aging or poorly-performing commercial centers as well as Downtown Cary. Redevelopment of older centers to more vibrant and attractive destinations is preferred over the development of new commercial centers.</p>	<p>The intent of this policy statement is to address underdeveloped and underperforming (i.e., aging, blighted, and vacant) commercial centers that are having an impact on community character and property values. Implementation of this policy could include incentives to encourage developers to reinvest in existing commercial centers and redevelop the centers to better meet current retail and shopping preferences.</p>
Policy 2: Focus Commercial Uses within Commercial Mixed Use Centers, Destination Centers, Downtown, and Commercial Centers	
<p>Focus commercial, retail, dining, and entertainment uses within existing and planned Commercial Mixed Use and Destination Centers, Downtown, and Commercial Centers as designated on the Future Growth Framework map.</p>	<p>The intent of this policy is to direct new commercial development to appropriate locations identified on the Future Growth Framework map: Commercial Centers, Commercial Mixed Use Centers, Downtown, and Destination Centers. This also includes secondary commercial uses in Employment Mixed Use Campuses.</p> <p>See Policy 7 in <i>Chapter 6: Shape</i> for additional opportunities for commercial uses outside of commercial development areas.</p>
Policy 3: Support the Development of a Limited Number of Destination Centers and Commercial Mixed Use Centers	
<p>In addition to Downtown, support the development of a limited number of Destination Centers and Commercial Mixed Use Centers that will have Cary’s highest densities and intensities of mixed use development, will be transit supportive, and will have the greatest potential to be high-functioning, premier centers.</p>	<p>This policy statement encourages the development of a limited number of high quality, vibrant, mixed use Destination and Commercial Mixed Use Centers that will provide a mix and intensity of uses that is higher than currently found in Cary’s existing mixed use or commercial centers. The locations of future Destination and Commercial Mixed Use Centers, as well as Downtown, are identified on the Future Growth Framework map. Implementation of this policy will require changes to the Town’s Land Development Ordinance to allow for and encourage higher density development in these locations.</p>

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION

1 Promote and Enable Revitalization of Existing Commercial Centers

Local governments are typically the leaders or catalysts for redevelopment efforts, laying the groundwork for private investment and new development. The Town of Cary will seek to participate in redevelopment projects that offer significant community benefits. A number of existing centers might present such opportunities in the coming decade(s), such as Cary Towne Center and other similar centers. Town partnerships might include assistance with infrastructure improvements, the location of public facilities, or other types of assistance to foster redevelopment.

Major Actions:

- Review all Town development regulations to identify and remove disincentives for redevelopment.
- Create baseline economic health indicators for aging commercial centers as a first step in evaluating the need for a Minimum Commercial Code.
- Develop evaluation criteria to guide public investments in redevelopment projects.
- Create new infill and redevelopment design guidelines that balance the goal of encouraging redevelopment with the goal of protecting the character of adjacent neighborhoods.



Seeing the need to both promote redevelopment to address its decaying downtown and to promote preservation of its historic assets, Asheville, North Carolina, has embraced public-private partnerships to turn downtown from a derelict urban center to a successful international destination. The City has supported redevelopment of the central business district by investing in public infrastructure, such as landscaping, and street and sidewalk improvements, as well as purchasing land and restoring a historic building for a school district administrative building. These projects have demonstrated the City's support for downtown redevelopment, and have spurred additional private sector investment.

An important part of redevelopment is creating unique public spaces that are memorable and inviting, and art is an important component of the public realm. The Town of Cary promotes public art through site-specific and community specific artworks that enhance the public realm, deepen a sense of place and civic identity, stimulate community dialogue, and transform Cary's public spaces into vibrant and meaningful places. Shown here is an art installation in Cary's Stone Creek Village entitled "Wind Plow."



2 Support and Enable Vibrant Mixed-Use and Destination Centers

Major Actions:

- Amend Cary's Land Development Ordinance and design guidelines to enable and guide development/ redevelopment of destination centers and commercial mixed-use centers, as well as shopping centers. Consider utilizing a form-based or hybrid code to foster design creativity and a sense of place.
- Identify and prioritize locations for catalyst public infrastructure investments or other forms of Town participation.
- Update the Alston Plan to align more closely with Destination Center goals.



The redevelopment of the Cottonwood regional suburban shopping mall in Holladay, Utah, is being achieved through a deliberate planning and design process that brought the City, developers, and the public together using a charrette design process to iteratively determine the future design of the site. A critical next step after the design for the project was established was the creation of a new regional mixed use zoning district and the rezoning approval of the site to this new district.

DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR TRANSITIONS BETWEEN CENTERS AND NEIGHBORHOODS

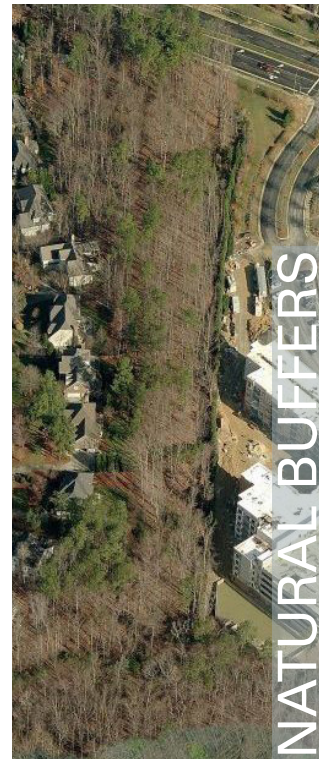
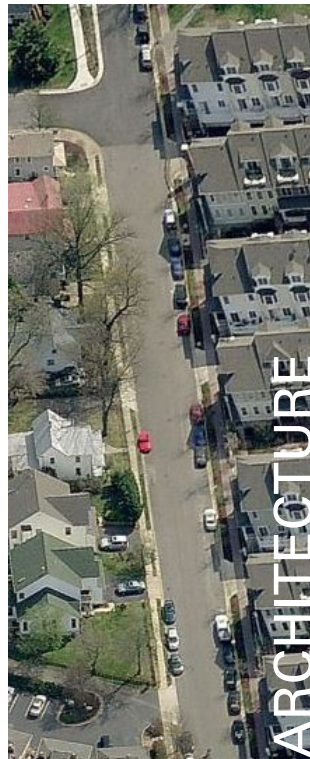
TRANSITION APPROACHES

Providing for the growth of mixed-use centers raises the challenge of how to transition between these new denser areas and established neighborhoods. **Determining the appropriate design approach for managing transitions between developments will depend on the objectives for the transitional space: separate developments or connect them.** This section sets out different approaches to making transitions that can be considered when approving future mixed use developments.

Design can be used to smooth connections between individual developments. An attractive, walkable, transitional space can be achieved through building form, land use, and architectural elements.

Design can also be used to separate and protect neighborhoods through the preservation of or planting of a natural buffer. Walkable connections to surrounding neighborhoods can be the lifeblood of mixed use spaces, but there are still times where it will be appropriate to provide separation.

This section highlights several examples for creating transitions between mixed use centers and existing neighborhoods: connecting with (1) form, (2) use, and (3) architecture, or separating with (4) natural buffers. These four strategies are not mutually exclusive, and a good design transition could make use of one or many of these approaches.



FORM TRANSITIONS

In the transitional space between a dense mixed use center and an established neighborhood, the building forms themselves can be varied to provide for a visually appealing gradient of change that does not negatively impact the views from within the neighborhood. This strategy typically includes stepping down the height and bulk of buildings in the transitional space.

Lyndhurst Ave in Charlotte effectively uses this strategy. In this case, the transition from a multi-story big-box anchor is created first by wrapped attached townhomes around the commercial building, and then stepping down in building mass and height to a row of apartment buildings that are a similar mass as the neighborhood homes across the local street. The effect is a smooth and pleasing visual transition between building forms. The transition space from the commercial center to the neighborhood is approximately the depth of two neighborhood lots.



Charlotte, NC: Street Level View of Form Transition

The multi-story commercial center all-but disappears at street level using this approach. In this particular example, the dense use is masked by transitions in building from large block commercial, to mid-size townhomes, to smaller sized apartments, to single-family homes.

- ① Multi-story commercial building with wrapped townhomes
- ② Mid-size apartment buildings
- ③ Single-family Neighborhood



Charlotte, NC: Aerial View of Form Transition

From the air, the mass of the commercial building is easily visible (in this case, a big-box construction and hardware store). The variety and placement of building forms in the transitional space helps create a gradual and connected relationship between the center and the adjacent neighborhood.

USE TRANSITIONS

Transitions can also be made using changes in uses, from more intense to less intense to create a gradual shift from the mixed-use center to the neighborhood. One strategy is to create the transition using multifamily residential as an intermediate use between the commercial center and the neighborhood. Another is to allow homes on the edge of the established neighborhood to be reused as small offices. Still another is to fill the transition with civic or recreation space.

The first variation of this strategy, using townhomes, is found in Southern Village in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. This approach creates a smooth transition between the different intensities of uses. Residents of the neighborhood do not feel like they are located adjacent to a mixed use center, but do enjoy the benefits of walking to its amenities.



Chapel Hill, NC: Street Level View of Use Transition

The townhomes (#2) are a much more compatible use to the single-family neighborhood. The mixed-use center was also designed to make use of topography and building placement to mask views from the neighborhood.

- ① Commercial Center
- ② Townhomes
- ③ Single Family Residential



Chapel Hill, NC: Aerial View of Use Transition

The design of the master planned development balances the need to limit the visual impacts of the denser mixed use center from the neighborhood, while also providing a connected and walkable environment for residents living in single-family homes on the edge of the development.

ARCHITECTURAL TRANSITIONS

In the transitional space between a denser mixed use center and an established neighborhood, the architectural treatment of new development can create a cohesive connection between the neighborhood and the center, while allowing for different uses to be proximate to each other. Common elements of this strategy include matching neighborhood character through building materials and architectural design elements such as roof lines.

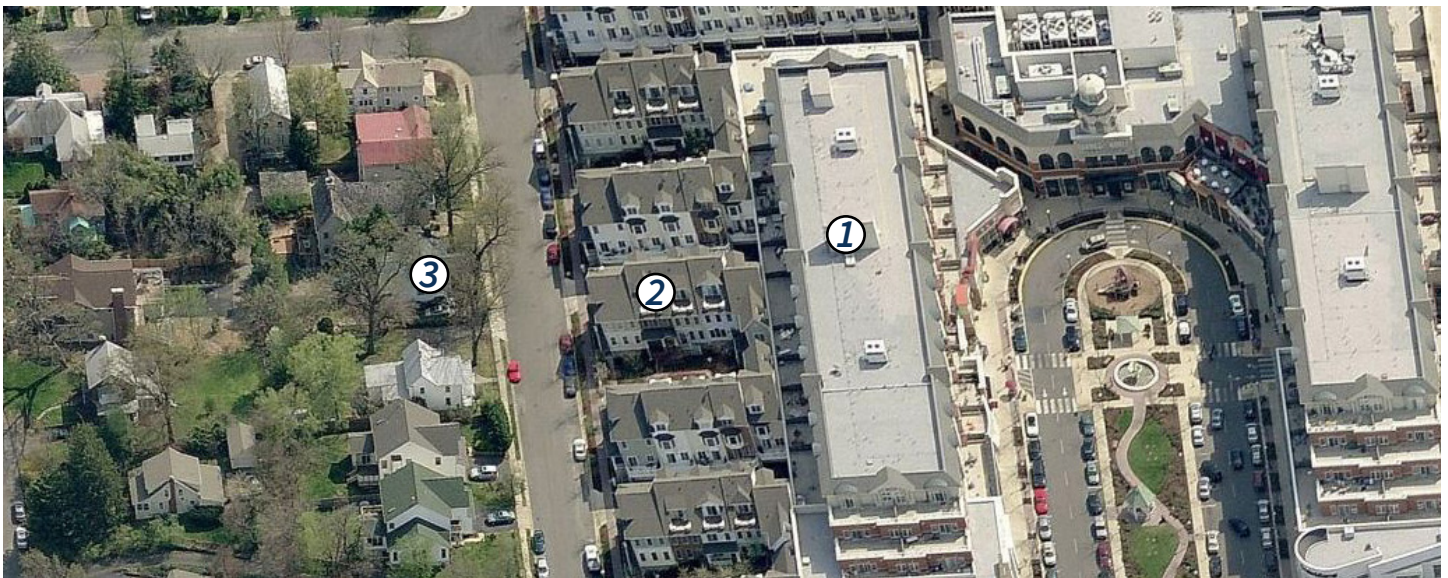
The Clarendon Market Common in Arlington, Virginia, effectively uses this strategy to transition between a large mixed use development and an adjacent single-family neighborhood. The multifamily units adjacent to the neighborhood are larger than a house, but the design of the building pulls elements from the surroundings, so that if walking or driving toward Market Common along local streets, the larger development appears to be just more of the same neighborhood. Even in places where the density difference is obvious, the structures still look like they belong to a collective whole.



Arlington, VA: Street View of Architectural Transitions

By using architectural elements from the surrounding neighborhood, the much larger mixed use center is masked and becomes just one more part of the neighborhood vista. By replicating the pitched roofs, the designer limited views of the largest buildings in the development.

- ① Largest Buildings of Mixed Use Center
- ② Attached Townhomes Imitating Context
- ③ Single-family Neighborhood



Arlington, VA: Aerial View of Architectural Transitions

From the air, it is clear how quickly the transition occurs, and residents can take advantage of that proximity to walk to amenities. On the local street the extent of the development is well hidden, and denser housing is made to blend in through the use of common architectural features.

NATURAL BUFFER TRANSITIONS

For situations that require separation of uses and that connectivity is not an objective, natural buffers can be preserved or planted to provide separation between uses. The thickness of the buffer can vary from a narrow strip to a large woods, and the natural area itself may be sparse or dense forest. Trees work best for visually blocking the uses from each other. The buffers may be municipal land, they may be owned by the neighborhood homeowner association, or they may be owned by the mixed use center development.

The Town of Cary itself has many examples of this strategy. A narrow buffer between The Arboretum and an adjacent residential neighborhood provides a visual block between the two developments. A similar type buffer occurs in many other areas of Town.



The Arboretum, Cary, NC: Street View of Natural Transition

From the neighborhood, you can see homes and the taller trees of the buffer. The higher density buildings disappear from view.

- ① Multi-family Apartments and Shopping
- ② Natural Tree Buffer
- ③ Single-family Neighborhood



The Arboretum, Cary, NC: Aerial View of Natural Transition

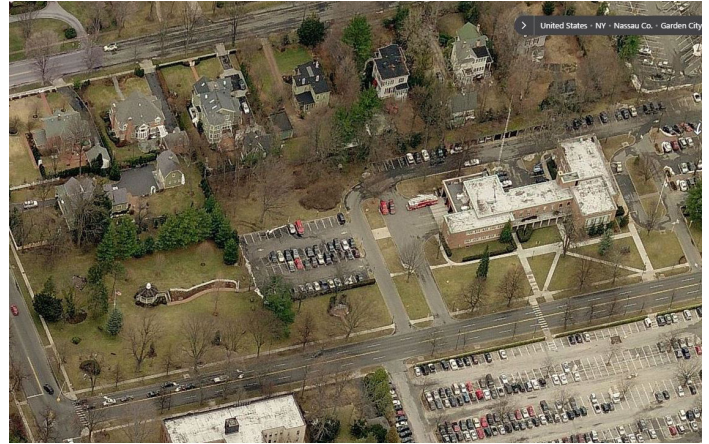
From the air, the sharp division is visible. The separation preserves neighborhood character and limits visual and physical access to the commercial center.

ADDITIONAL TRANSITION EXAMPLES



FORM: Chevy Chase, MD

On this street near Bethesda Row, the form of buildings change as you move away from a dense corridor on the right. Gradually the size reduces to the scale of the rest of the neighborhood.



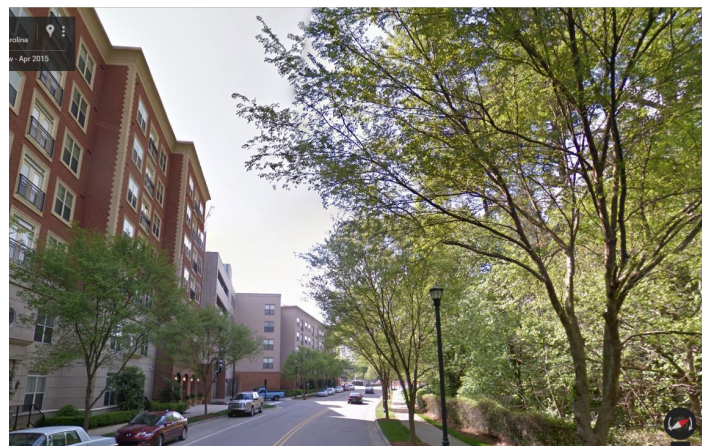
USE: Garden City, NY

This neighborhood (at the top) experiences a use transition, with recreation and civic buildings in the transitional space and the commercial uses at the bottom.



ARCHITECTURE: Boulder, CO

This neighborhood commercial building takes many architectural cues from its neighbor.



NATURAL BUFFER: Raleigh, NC

Thicker buffers that separate mixed use centers and adjacent single-family neighborhoods, such as this one on St. Albans drive in Raleigh, can also serve as a park or amenity for residents in the new higher density housing.

RELATED POLICY DIRECTION IN OTHER CHAPTERS

This plan has been organized to address specific topics in specific chapters; however, the policies listed throughout this plan are very much interrelated. Listed here are the policies included in other plan chapters that relate to the Town’s policies on commercial development.

Shop: Creating Vibrant Destinations	Live:	Work:	Engage:	Shape:	Move:	Serve:
	Fostering Strong Neighborhoods	Assuring Continued Prosperity	Experiencing the Cary Community	Guiding Community Growth	Providing Transportation Choices	Meeting Community Needs
	Policy #4: Provide the Greatest Variety of Housing Options in Mixed Use Centers	Policy #1: Grow A Sustainable and Diversifying Workforce Policy #2: Enhance Locational Appeal to Businesses and Workers Policy #7: Ensure the Economic Growth and Vitality of Downtown Policy #8: Support the Locational Needs of New and Expanding Firms Policy #10: Reserve and Provide Employment Sites in Selected Commercial Mixed Use and Destination Centers	Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan Goal #2 Public Art Master Plan Vision	Policy #1: Distribute Commercial Centers, Mixed-Use Centers, and Destination Centers Across Town Policy #2: Focus the Most Intense Types of Development in Strategic Locations Policy #3: Encourage Mixed-Use Development Policy #4: Support and Facilitate Redevelopment and Infill Development Policy #5: Support the Revitalization of Targeted Development Corridors Policy #6: Provide Appropriate Transitions Between Land Uses	Policy #7: Target Transit Investments	

5. ENGAGE

Experiencing the Cary Community



IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Adopted Plans
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Policy Direction
- How We Will Achieve Our Vision
- Related Policy Direction in Other Chapters

Cary's extensive greenway system, network of parks and open space, cultural opportunities, sports venues and recreational programs continue to make the Town a premier community for residents and visitors. Cary will work to increase the accessibility and variety of recreation services in order to meet the needs of our growing and diversifying population. The Town will further develop its public art and historic preservation programs that convey Cary's unique identity and history. All of these efforts will add to the community character and sense of place that attract and ENGAGE bright, creative people and businesses.

CARY VALUES:

Creating a Vibrant Arts and Cultural Environment

Cary will create a vibrant cultural and arts environment through performances, exhibits, festivals and places.

Preserving Historic Resources

Cary will preserve sites, structures and traditions that help convey the history of Cary as a source of community pride.

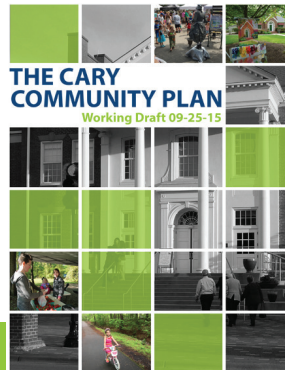
Providing Extensive and High Quality Parks and Recreation

Cary will provide extensive and high quality recreation services and facilities as a signature of the community, helping to make Cary a desirable place to live, supporting strong property values, and promoting healthy living. Opportunities for recreation include a well-connected greenway network, an expansive system of parks and natural areas of all sizes, and a diversity of recreational facilities and offerings for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

5. ENGAGE

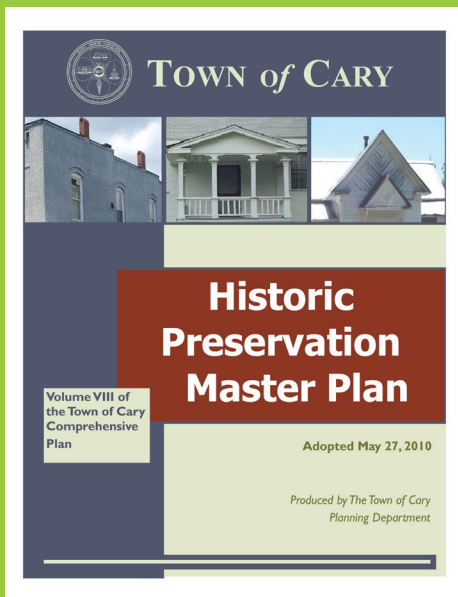
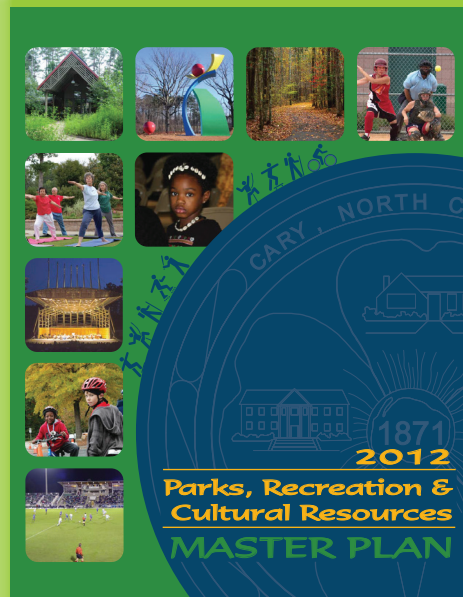
ADOPTED PLANS

This Engage chapter summarizes three previously adopted plans, each of which is still current, that represent the Town's current policies with respect to parks, recreation, cultural resources, public art, and historic preservation. The three plans are the 2012 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Master Plan, the 2012 Public Art Master Plan, and the 2010 Historic Preservation Master Plan. In 2020, an addendum was adopted for the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Master Plan to incorporate the area encompassed by the Chatham-Cary Joint Land Use Plan; the addendum is considered fully a part of the 2012 Parks Master Plan. These plans will remain as separate, free-standing documents, but are summarized here and incorporated by reference into the Cary Community Plan. Each plan currently provides goals or a vision, objectives, and recommended actions toward achieving Cary's ENGAGE values. As part of future updates to the Cary Community Plan these plans or the policies they represent will be updated and incorporated into the main plan document.



The three plans included in this chapter are fully part of the Cary Community Plan (CCP). In the event of conflict between these three plans and the CCP, the newer CCP policies, recommendations, and guidance govern.

5. ENGAGE



Current Policy Plans

The following table summarizes the purpose and planning timeframes of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan, the Public Art Master Plan, and the Historic Preservation Master Plan.

	Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan	Public Art Master Plan	Historic Preservation Master Plan
Purpose	<p>The plan provides decision-makers with the tools to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve the parks and recreation needs and interest of Cary’s current and future populations. • Maintain the quality of the system. • Ensure long-term sustainability of investments and operations. 	<p>The plan provides decision-makers with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of the types of public art. • Opportunities where public art can make the greatest impact. • Venues and themes for increasing the diversity of Cary’s public art collection. • Ideas for educational and outreach programs. • Recommended practices for integrating public art into Town policies and processes. 	<p>The plan provides decision-makers with a comprehensive and coordinated approach to historic preservation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally defensible administrative and regulatory processes • Approaches for preserving historic resources • Recommendations for integrating historic preservation into Town policies • Ideas for public outreach and education
Timeframe	5 to 10 Years	10 Years	10 Years

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Maintaining the High Quality of the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources System with a Changing and Growing Population

Recent surveys have shown that Cary residents place a high value on the Town's parks and recreation facilities, and that making improvements and/or renovating existing facilities is a high priority. Due to the local trend showing an aging and culturally diversifying population, Cary will strive to enhance recreational opportunities through programming (such as fitness, heritage, environmental education and science, technology, engineering and math education, and therapeutic and specialized recreation for seniors) and the exploration of new facilities to meet the growing and changing recreational needs. A list of future challenges include:

- Continuing to maintain the high quality of the parks, recreation, and cultural resources system.
- Balancing parks and recreation facilities within areas of population expansion, ensuring equitable access to programs, facilities, and resources. Increase the accessibility of existing and future facilities by considering neighborhood context and connectivity to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Being flexible and responsive to changing demographics, emerging trends, and evolving priorities.
- Completing gaps within the Town's greenway system and connecting to local and regional trail systems.
- Strengthening the stewardship and management of natural and historical resources.
- Consideration of additional sources of funding to assist with the completion of capital projects including substantial naming rights and sponsorships as well as community/park foundations.
- Continuing to incorporate environmentally sustainable solutions into the parks and recreation system – including facilities and operations.
- Continuing to collaborate with community partners including Wake County Public School System and other groups and organizations.
- Continuing to engage and grow our volunteer base.
- Keeping up with technological changes as customer demand and expectations continue to broaden.
- Planning and acquisition of land for new parks, trails and other community recreation facilities in expanding areas, particularly in the western and southern sections of the Town proper.



Maintaining Cary as an Amateur Sports Destination

Cary has positioned itself as one of the premier destinations for local, regional and national sport tournaments and events. Since 2004, the Town has developed three major sports venues, including the Cary Tennis Park, the USA Baseball national Training Complex, and the Wake Med Soccer Park.

During that time, the Town has hosted over 50 major professional, collegiate and amateur championships. These events have included Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) tennis, soccer, and cross country championships; Division I, II, and III baseball finals and Division II and III cross country regional tournaments; and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Men's and Women's College Cup Championships (soccer). During that time, these events have generated over \$90 million in economic impact for the Town of Cary and the Triangle region.

The Town was one of the first in the region to capitalize on sports tourism. Sports tourism has gained serious momentum over the past decade and has become an economic stimulus for communities. A study by Sports Marketing Surveys USA (SMS) shows that in 2014, there were 34.9 million people who traveled with an overnight stay to participate in or watch an amateur sports event, a figure that has remained fairly consistent going back to 2008. While 18 percent of these sports travelers were ages six to 17, about 51 percent were ages 25 to 54, evidence that families are accompanying their young players to events.

Future challenges for maintaining Cary as an amateur sports destination include:

- Continuing investment in all three of Cary's sports venues. With the growing competition among communities nationally for sports tourism dollars, every effort needs to be made to make those improvements necessary to keep Cary's sports venues relevant and competitive against other venues. Considerations may include suitable capacity to host national events, professional level maintenance, professional level amenities, accessibility, and suitable technological infrastructure.
- With the growing number of communities investing in sports venues, continuing to actively market the quality of our venues and our expertise in hosting national events so that Cary can stay competitive in the growing sports tourism arena.



WakeMed soccer park, located in the Eastern Cary Gateway Destination Center, is one of three major sports venues that attracts national sports tournaments and events to Cary.

Demand for Robust Arts and Culture Offerings

Cary benefits from a wide offering of cultural and arts activities, made possible through partnerships between the Town and more than 60 arts and cultural organizations. Cultural activities and amenities are not only rich cultural offerings that enhance quality of life, but have important economic impacts.

Cary is home to several excellent cultural arts facilities including:

- Cary Arts Center
- Page-Walker Arts and History Center
- The Cary
- Koka Booth Amphitheatre
- Sertoma Amphitheatre in Bond Park

Building off of these facilities and Cary's many cultural arts programs, the Town has opportunities to continue and expand its cultural offerings for current and future residents of the community. Future challenges for the cultural arts include:

- Providing programs for growing western quadrant of Cary.
- Continued emphasis on Downtown Cary will include a focus on the arts, culture venues with a feature on festivals and events to attract visitors and support local business.
- In the coming years, the Town will work to protect, preserve, and reuse its historic structures as a connection to its rich cultural heritage.
- As the Town will continue to integrate art into the public realm, the challenge will be to install art that is both accepted by the general public and deemed cutting edge and unique.

All of these challenges, including maintaining existing facilities while meeting increasing demand for cultural activities may require additional revenue sources in the future.



Built in 2001, Cary's Koka Booth Amphitheatre is located on a 14 acre property with hardwoods and pines and hosts community events and world class performances.

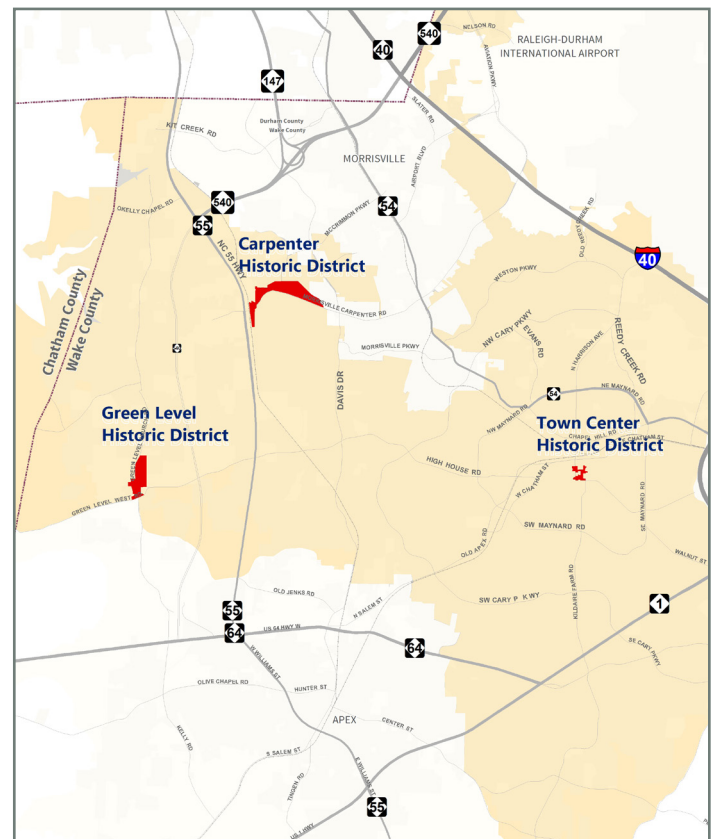
Protecting and Capitalizing on Cary's Historic Resources

Within its planning boundary, Cary has three National Register Historic Districts, four individually-designated National Register properties, and seven local Historic Landmarks. A town-wide comprehensive historic resources survey was completed in 2014, resulting in an inventory of approximately 350 properties that contain one or more buildings at least fifty years old. As Cary approaches geographic build-out and there are fewer vacant tracts of land left to develop, there is increasing pressure to redevelop these properties. Many of the pre-1940 historic buildings that have survived up until now are the best and/or the rarest of Cary's remaining historic resources. Challenges for the Town are to encourage preservation of these buildings as properties redevelop, and to ensure transportation and infrastructure projects respect and complement historic resources and landscapes. An emerging challenge for the Town is to recognize and take steps now to preserve the best of its mid-century (1940 to 1969) historic resources – those newly-historic buildings and structures that will help convey to future generations the sweeping cultural and technological changes of that era.

To meet these challenges, the Town has the opportunity to take full advantage of state enabling legislation that allows Cary, through the Historic Preservation Commission, to build on its established local landmark program and also to implement new regulatory- and incentive-based preservation programs. Some programs recommended by the Historic Preservation Master Plan for the next five years include a revolving fund program for the purchase and re-sale of historic properties; a demolition-delay ordinance; and local historic district overlay zoning for areas of town such as downtown and Carpenter. Cary has the foundation in place on which to build its program; now the challenge is to further develop and implement preservation programs and policies that capitalize on the many cultural and economic benefits that historic preservation can bring to Cary, such as:

- **Community character** – historic properties help Cary retain an authentic, quality community character and a sense of civic pride.
- **Economic and fiscal benefits** – compared to new construction, rehabilitation of historic buildings is usually more labor-intensive than materials-intensive. Consequently, more jobs are created; they are more likely to be filled by local artisans; and more of the dollars earned stay in the local community. Also, there is legitimate financial value in the character of historic buildings, and smart developers understand this fact and capitalize on it.

- **Environmental sustainability** – adaptive reuse of historic buildings recycles valuable building materials rather than sending them to landfills. Reusing buildings rather than demolishing them retains the embodied time and energy that was associated with acquiring the natural resources and producing the building in the first place.



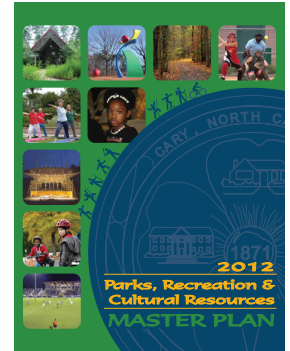
Cary's National Register of Historic Districts. Detailed maps of historic structures are located in the Downtown, Historic Carpenter, and Green Level Special Planning Areas of Chapter 6: SHAPE.

The three plans included in this chapter are fully part of the Cary Community Plan (CCP). In the event of conflict between these three plans and the CCP, the newer CCP policies, recommendations, and guidance govern.

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan

Goals & Objectives

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (PRCR) Master Plan charts a course for providing a balanced system of cultural arts, active recreation, passive recreation, and conservation resources to all residents over a five to ten year period. Demographic information, public input, and advisory board recommendations were taken into consideration. Using an accurate inventory of department offerings, including both facilities and programs, recommendations are made for addressing the current needs of the Town, with flexibility to incorporate future facilities as the Town grows and changes. The plan also provides capital and operating investment decision-making tools to guide decision-makers. To provide high quality, accessible, sustainable parks, recreation and cultural resources to community members of all ages and backgrounds, the Plan offers the following goals and objectives:



PRCR Plan Goal 1 - Maintain a diverse and balanced park and open space system as the Town of Cary grows.

The intent of this goal is to plan for the recreational and open space needs of the growing population especially in the western and southern sections of Cary.

Objectives

- Continue to protect areas that are ecologically important and have a high wildlife habitat value.
- Actively manage the Town’s natural resources by developing resource management plans for park areas, greenways and future park parcels.
- Continue to develop a high quality, geographically-based system of parks throughout Town.
- Update the Master Plan Level of Service to match with the Land Dedication Ordinance.
- Evaluate open space requirements for future developments and ensure developments are providing adequate open space that maximizes public benefit. Work with developers to set aside important open space that provides trail connectivity, wildlife habitat corridors, and water quality protection.
- Develop a well-connected open space system in the Maynard Loop and downtown that provides improved opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists, promotes economic vitality of the Town’s center, and reflects the unique character of these areas.
- Upon approval of the Cary-Chatham Land Use Plan, develop a plan in partnership with Chatham County for future parks, greenways, and open space.
- Based on an increasing demand for court-related athletic fields, develop a plan to increase the quantity and diversity of court types that are geographically dispersed throughout Town.
- Strive to meet demand for athletic fields by converting select fields to synthetic turf, adding lighting, and expanding partnerships with schools and local sport clubs, where appropriate.
- Based on an increasing demand for baseball fields, develop a plan to increase the quantity of field types that are geographically dispersed throughout Town.

PRCR Plan Goal 2 - Provide Cary citizens with a highly functional, safe, well-maintained greenway network that provides recreation, transportation, and education opportunities and wildlife benefits.

The intent of this goal is to provide objectives to continue to develop a comprehensive greenway system. While considerable progress has been made over the past fifteen years, the major effort in the near future will need to be to complete the remaining gaps and to complete links to adjoining trail systems.

Objectives

- Improve community awareness and use of trail network.
- Complete a system of trails that serve the entire Cary community by linking parks, open space, schools, and other public facilities to residential, commercial, and employment areas.
- Fund greenway/trail network expansion.
- Connect to national, regional, and adjacent jurisdiction trail networks.
- Provide well maintained and safe trails.
- Provide a seamless and safe trail user experience across the entire greenway network.

PRCR Plan Goal 3 - Provide a mix of recreation and cultural arts programs responsive to a growing and diverse population.

The intent of this goal is to make sure all of Cary’s citizens have access to high quality, affordable programs and services which reflect the diverse mix of ages, races and ethnicities, social economics, and abilities of its people. A diverse mix of quality programs are needed to meet the growing and changing needs of the community.

Objectives

- Base future programming on research and assessments to reflect the true needs and demands of Cary citizens.
- Consider the implementation of the approved Specialized Recreation Plan to establish a formal program for people with disabilities.
- Implement innovative and diverse programming for seniors.
- Emphasize programming for fitness and wellness.
- Expand heritage programming and interpretation.
- Expand festivals and special events with an emphasis on downtown.

PRCR Plan Goal 4 - Enhance program planning and market analysis efforts to more strategically deliver services.

The intent of this goal is to stay up-to-date with the quality and content of programming for recreation, cultural arts and athletics. The objective of this policy is to invest in the ongoing analysis of the services provided by the Town so that these services reflect the needs of the community.

Objectives

- Review existing programs to determine most effective use of program resources.

PRCR Plan Goal 5 – Provide an equitable distribution of public indoors recreation spaces in Cary that is sustainable.

The intent of this goal is to provide parameters for the development of future indoor facilities.

Objectives

- Refine Service Model for new Community Centers to a larger multigenerational, multipurpose center considering a proposed mix of components includes indoor leisure aquatics, fitness components, gyms, and multipurpose spaces for flexible programming.
- Develop a new, large multipurpose community center in an accessible location.
- Identify opportunities to meet the indoor recreation needs of a growing population in western Cary and southern Cary.
- Identify improvements or additions to existing Community Centers to best meet community needs and enhance the functionality.

PRCR Plan Goal 6 - Maintain quality cultural arts facilities that celebrate Cary’s history and diversity.

The intent of this goal is to recognize the importance of preserving and utilizing the local historical and cultural resources that are part of the Cary community.

Objectives

- Develop a strategic preservation/adaptive reuse plan for Town-owned historic buildings and sites to be operated by the Cary Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department.
- Maintain high quality of Town Amphitheatres (Koka Booth and Sertoma) in order to continue to meet regional and community needs for outdoor performance venues.
- Pursue the implementation of the overall goals of the Civic and Cultural Arts Plan to create an arts district within Downtown Cary.
- Create and activate outdoor community gathering and event spaces in Downtown Cary to accommodate festivals and special events.
- Seek opportunities to incorporate public art in the development of the Town’s infrastructure, transportation, and parks and recreation system per the Public Art Master Plan guidelines.
- Continue to incorporate and expand cultural arts programming at Community Centers in response to community growth and interests.
- Identify new spaces for cultural arts programming as demand grows.

PRCR Plan Goal 7 - Manage the Town’s competitive Sports Venues so they are financially sustainable, continue to attract regional and national events, and are considered an asset by all citizens.

The intent of this goal is to leverage the distinctive benefits of the high-quality sport venues in Cary with incorporating community use and maximizing sports tourism. Cary is viewed as leader in the municipal sports venue world with superior quality venues and exceptional athlete experiences. This goal should brand the Town of Cary as an amateur sports destination. As other communities begin to compete for this market, the Town will continue to invest in and make on-going improvements in these venues including expanding spectator capacities, proper vehicular and pedestrian access, and technology advancements.

Objectives

- Implement approved projects at three sports venues based on the inter-local agreement between the Town and Wake County.
- Diversify and maximize use of existing sports venues.
- Explore partnership and funding opportunities for additional sport venues, including a large field house with multi-use athletic spaces to address local, regional, and national demand for tournaments and special events.

PRCR Plan Goal 8 – Expand special use facilities in response to community needs, trends, and funding and partnership opportunities.

The intent of this goal is to recognize the need to continue to invest in unique and special facilities that reflect the diversity of the community.

Objectives

- Consider development of new special use facilities to meet diverse needs of community.
- Expand the Stevens Nature Center at Hemlock Bluffs to accommodate more program participants.
- Consider incorporating park specialty facilities with the development of all new parks.

PRCR Plan Goal 9: Incorporate best management and planning practices to ensure quality services and efficient use of resources.

The intent of this goal is to outline those potential actions that will result in the more efficient delivery of services for Cary citizens.

Objectives

- Ensure that the Department’s Business Plan, the Long Range Program Plan, and all other facility Business Plans align with the broader goals and vision of the 2012 PRCR Master Plan.
- Develop a Strategic Communication and Marketing Plan to promote parks, recreation, and cultural resource facilities and services.
- Improve customer service and the delivery of services through the continued use of new technology.
- Enhance financial management tools to effectively track and manage costs to deliver services.
- Expand the use of alternative funding through sponsorships, volunteers, grants, and donations.
- Continue to seek Wake County Hotel Occupancy Tax funding to support high quality, competitive venues to contribute to the regional economy.
- Expand revenue generation opportunities as appropriate at parks, recreation, and cultural arts facilities (e.g., rentals, concessions, etc.).
- Expand partnerships to encourage joint development of facilities.
- Provide park facilities and services that promote the Town’s sustainability goals by developing and implementing environmentally sensitive design principles and practices.
- Continue to incorporate the new 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and guidelines in parks and recreation facilities.
- Maintain updated records of Town-owned and -managed land, park and facility inventory, historical collections, demographic data, and planning documents to facilitate the ongoing management of Town resources.

Public Art Master Plan

Vision and Objectives

The 2012 Cary Public Art Master Plan is an update to the 2001 Plan and provides a platform for public art policies, guidelines, and recommendations. Through a community outreach process that included focus groups, public forums, workshops, and interviews; the plan offers ideas and recommendations for the Cary Public Art Program. The Plan (1) suggests venues, art types, and themes for public art based on public input and an urban design analysis for existing and desired conditions, (2) identifies numerous educational and outreach programs for implementation by the Public Art Advisory Board and Public Art Coordinator, and (3) provides an overview of types of public art and suggests venues and themes for increasing the diversity of Cary's public art collection.



The Plan offers the following vision statement and program objectives for a public art program that ENGAGES the community, promotes civic identity, and transforms places:

Cary Public Art Vision: Promote public art through site-specific and community-specific artworks that enhance the public realm, deepen a sense of place and civic identity, stimulate community dialogue and transform Cary's public spaces into vibrant and meaningful places.

The intent of the Public Art Master Plan is to guide future policy and program decisions related to Cary's public art program.

Objectives

- Enhance the quality of life for every citizen of Cary by integrating public art into public spaces, including streetscapes, infrastructure, public facilities, parks, and greenways.
- Enrich the identity of Cary through public art that communicates the Town's unique culture, landscape, and heritage.
- Support economic development goals through the thoughtful inclusion of public art throughout the Town of Cary, thus promoting tourism and expanding business opportunities.
- Engage all citizens of Cary in building community identity by encouraging civic spirit, local pride, and increased citizen involvement in community life.
- Promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the power of the arts for individual enjoyment and civic growth.

CARY PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES

Great cities are remembered for interesting streets, lively gathering places, surprising discoveries, and pleasant strolls – physical and social environments where public art can meaningfully connect people with place. Through metaphors, illusions, story-telling, and cultural messages, public art creates new and exciting experiences that build upon other urban design strategies. Public art thrives in public spaces that are centers of human activity and are designed as destination places.

Over the past few decades, rapid development has transformed Cary and the surrounding landscape into a suburban community with multiple commercial centers and residential neighborhoods. Public art operates within this rapidly changing context to:

- Cultivate Cary’s emerging community identity/identities
- Show that Cary’s public facilities, including its parks and greenways, are part of a larger system that supports community and culture
- Ensure that larger-scale, mixed-use development in Cary is part of the town-wide public realm
- Advance the goal of making the Town Center a unique, vibrant, dynamic, pedestrian-friendly location
- Continue to place a public art emphasis in the downtown core along Academy Street

The following photographs illustrate how public art in Cary lends distinct character to places and is an important component of creative placemaking within Cary’s developments.



Cary's public art is a critical component of the public realm that creates a sense of place in developments around Town.

"Dancing Beams" (shown above) and the transportation bus shelter on Kildaire Farm Road (shown to the left) are two examples of how public art can contribute to the unique sense of these places and add a visual richness to public environments.

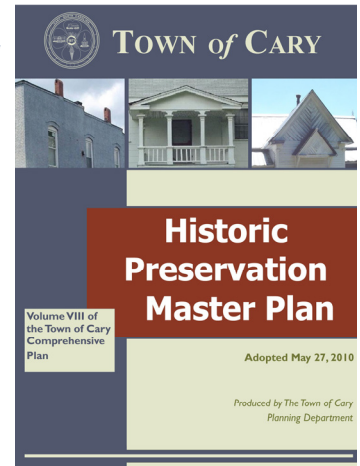
This Historic Preservation Master Plan (HPMP) is fully part of the Cary Community Plan (CCP). In the event of conflict between the HPMP and the CCP, the newer CCP policies, recommendations, and guidance govern.

Historic Preservation Master Plan

Goals and Objectives

The 2010 Historic Preservation Master Plan (HPMP) provides guidance for establishing and developing the Town’s first formal preservation program.

The Plan offers the following goals and objectives:



HPMP Goal 1: Establish Fair and Effective Processes and Policies For Preservation

The intent of this goal is to ensure a legally defensible and effective preservation program.

Objectives

- Adhere to an effective administrative and legal framework when implementing historic preservation activities.
- Maintain a complete, up-to-date survey of Cary’s historic resources.
- Ensure that historic preservation concerns are considered in all Town actions and ordinances.
- Promote preservation using economic incentives whenever possible.

HPMP Goal 2: Preserve, Protect and Maintain Cary’s Historic Resources

The intent of this goal is to use all available tools to proactively preserve historic resources.

Objectives

- Preserve and protect Cary’s historic resources.
- Preserve and protect cemeteries and archaeological resources.
- Encourage adaptive re-use of historic structures.
- Effectively steward Town-owned historic resources.

HPMP Goal 3: Preserve Historic Contexts

The intent of this goal is to preserve the land and patterns associated with historic buildings that complete the perspective.

Objectives

- Protect existing development patterns that contribute to historic areas.
- Preserve and protect historic viewsheds, rural and designed landscapes, and associated historic resources.

HPMP Goal 4: Raise Awareness of Historic Preservation

The intent of this goal is to increase appreciation for history and historic preservation.

Objectives

- Increase the visibility and accessibility of historic resources and preservation information.
- Educate the community about Cary’s history.
- Promote understanding of the environmental and economic value of historic preservation.
- Promote a sense of pride among owners of historic properties.

HPMP Goal 5: Document, Preserve and Share Cary’s Culture & Heritage

The intent of this goal is to promote understanding of the people and events that have shaped Cary.

Objectives

- Continue to capture and record Cary’s stories and history using a range of technologies.
- Facilitate research on all aspects of Cary’s history and development (religious, military, cultural, geographic, transportation), including the recent past.
- Continue to foster an appreciation of Cary’s history and diverse cultural heritage.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION

1 Implement the Recommendations of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan

Chapter Ten of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resource Master Plan contains an implementation chart with 248 proposed implementation actions (see Appendix). The chart identifies general timing, responsible entities, and financial impacts for each implementation action. The implementation actions are arranged in five sections:

Parks and Open Space

This section contains actions to protect and manage ecologically important areas, develop a high quality parks system, ensure adequate provision of parks in future development, coordinate with other jurisdictions, and meet demands of the community.

Greenways and Trails

This section contains actions to increase awareness and use of Cary's trail network, link key areas and destinations in the community, expand the greenway network, connect to regional trail networks, and provide safe and well-maintained trails.

Recreation Programs

This section contains actions to establish objective measures of program need and effectively use resources, establish formal programs for persons with disabilities, provide programming for seniors, promote fitness and wellness, and expand festivals and special events.

Community and Special Use Facilities

This section contains actions designed to increase best practices in facility management through effective use of financial tools, facility planning, customer services, and sustainability. Other actions seek to expand Cary's stock of community and indoor recreation centers, maintain cultural area facilities and amphitheatres, create an arts district, expand access to sports venues, and accommodate more programming at the nature center.

Best Management Practices

This section contains actions to audit and align the department's plans against the broader goals of the PRCR Master Plan, promote PRCR facilities and services, improve customer service, effectively maintain records, manage costs, expand funding sources and revenue generation, and increase the accessibility and sustainability of facilities.

2 Implement the Recommendations of the Public Art Master Plan

Chapter 8 of the Public Art Master Plan recommends the following programs, practices and administrative tasks that should be explored and implemented as deemed appropriate:

- Adopt a town policy that public art is expected to be considered for all capital construction processes. As projects are approved, public art will be commissioned, funded, and implemented as an integrated part of approved capital planning projects.
- Prepare site design standards for public art in private development and the public realm.
- Consider developing a public-art-in-private-development ordinance that would provide incentives for developers to incorporate public art.
- Adopt a formal Town policy on public art that acknowledges the role of public art in capital projects, including transportation projects, public works, and parks and open space development.
- Prepare a work agenda for community educational programs on public art.
- Develop partnerships with corporations, businesses and arts organizations for sponsorships, programs, grants and pooled resources.
- Include the Public Art Master Plan as a chapter of the future Cary Community Plan. This new plan will encompass existing plans and integrate public art into the framework throughout the plan.
- Develop a master plan for public art in the Town Center district, working jointly with the Downtown Development Manager.

3 Implement the Recommendations of the Historic Preservation Master Plan

Chapter Six of the Historic Preservation Master Plan contains an action plan and implementation schedule that includes recommended implementation year(s) and involved entities (see Appendix). There are 71 action items categorized into three separate implementation phases:

Phase 1: Strengthening the Framework

(timeframe 1-3 years)

This phase includes priority actions as well as actions that can be implemented in a short period of time, including a comprehensive survey of historic properties, development of a Historic Preservation Commission, prioritization of historic properties, new development standards and Town policies, and engaging in meetings and outreach efforts to promote historic preservation.

Phase 2: Program Development

(timeframe 4-7 years)

In this phase, actions include achieving Certified Local Government status, sponsorship of workshops, incentive development, outreach to property owners, ordinance development, and additional public and stakeholder outreach efforts.

Phase 3: Looking Ahead

(timeframe 8+ years)

In this phase, actions include development of a historic preservation resource library, identification of new historic properties of interest, and investigating financing mechanisms such as a historic preservation revolving fund.

Ongoing Actions: Programs Already Underway that Will Continue

The plan calls for continuing current historic preservation work that provides outreach assistance to property owners, identifies eligible properties, educates the public, and seeks grant funding.

4 Incorporate the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan, Public Art Master Plan, and Historic Preservation Master Plan into the Cary Community Plan Document

Major Actions:

Update the three existing plans and incorporate them into the main Cary Community Plan document within five years of its adoption.

For each plan, the update should:

- Examine existing conditions
- Evaluate trends and update opportunities and challenges
- Provide new or updated policies related to parks, recreation, cultural resources, public art, and historic preservation
- Identify new policy initiatives and recommended actions

RELATED POLICY DIRECTION IN OTHER CHAPTERS

This plan has been organized to address specific topics in specific chapters; however, the policies listed throughout this plan are very much interrelated. Listed here are the policies included in other plan chapters that relate to the Town’s policies on parks and recreation, cultural resources, public art, and historic preservation.

Engage: Experiencing the Cary Community	Live:	Work:	Shop:	Shape:	Move:	Serve:
	Fostering Strong Neighborhoods	Assuring Continued Prosperity	Creating Vibrant Destinations	Guiding Community Growth	Providing Transportation Choices	Meeting Community Needs
	<p>Policy #1: Maintain Neighborhood Character</p>	<p>Policy #5: Attract New, High Value Businesses</p> <p>Policy #7: Ensure the Economic Growth and Vitality of Downtown</p> <p>Policy #9: Promote High Quality Education</p>		<p>Policy #8: Preserve and Maintain Cary’s Attractive Appearance and Quality of Development</p>	<p>Policy #4: Focus Investments on Improving Connections and Closing Gaps</p> <p>Policy #6: Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossings</p> <p>Policy #8: Ensure a Well-Maintained System</p>	<p>Policy #2: Provide Safe, Reliable Water and Wastewater Services</p> <p>Policy #3: Encourage Environmentally Responsible Stormwater Management</p> <p>Policy #5: Protect and Restore Open Space and the Natural Environment</p> <p>Policy #6: Protect Air Quality</p> <p>Policy #9: Preserve and Protect the Urban Tree Canopy</p>