

CEDAR VALLEY

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DISTRICT

Final Report

Prepared by EPR, P.C. for the City of Winchester

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Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

The Cedar Valley Neighborhood Design District (NDD) represents a significant initiative by the City of Winchester to revitalize and transform strategic areas into vibrant, mixed-use communities. This effort aims to enhance residents' well-being by integrating residential, commercial, and recreational spaces within a thoughtfully pre-planned development framework.

Spanning approximately 107 acres, Cedar Valley includes key intersections such as Valley Avenue, Cedar Creek Grade, Hope Drive, Weems Lane, and the historic Ward Plaza site. The planning process was comprehensive, involving phases such as design guideline creation, conceptual plan reviews, and neighborhood meetings. Robust community engagement was ensured through the efforts of a Support Team and a Neighborhood Design District Advisory Committee.

Key outcomes of the planning process include recommendations for improved transportation infrastructure, the integration of mixed-use developments, and the creation of public spaces. The redevelopment plan emphasizes connectivity, the integration of residential and commercial uses, and the development of parks and recreational areas to foster community.

Cedar Valley has a rich history as a commercial hub, highlighted by the establishment of Ward Plaza in 1964. Although predominantly zoned for commercial use, the area includes residential and industrial zones. Existing infrastructure adequately serves the area, but upgrades may be necessary for future developments, particularly in adding public green spaces and recreational facilities.

The vision for Cedar Valley involves transforming it into a mixed-use activity center with walkable neighborhoods. High-density residential buildings with ground-floor commercial spaces will line Valley Avenue and Ward Plaza, creating a vibrant live-work-play environment. Medium-density residential areas will offer townhouses and "1 over 1" units with integrated open spaces, while traditional single-family homes will be maintained in select areas. Strategically placed mixed-use buildings will support local businesses and create dynamic street life.

Ward Plaza will serve as the central commercial hub, featuring significant retail spaces, including a large grocery store. Commercial buildings along Valley Avenue should foster an active street frontage, while additional commercial zones on Cedar Creek Grade will distribute economic activities throughout the neighborhood. Planned public spaces, including central and pocket parks and green corridors, will promote walking and cycling. Design elements should emphasize aesthetics, functionality, and sustainability, with green infrastructure to manage stormwater and reduce runoff.

To support this ambitious vision, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) will be used to help fund critical public improvements. This financing mechanism will leverage the increased property tax revenues generated by new developments to reinvest in the area's infrastructure, further catalyzing growth and revitalization efforts.

Cedar Valley is poised to become a model of smart urban development, seamlessly blending residential, commercial, and recreational spaces. This comprehensive redevelopment plan underscores the importance of community engagement, connectivity, and sustainability in creating a vibrant and inclusive neighborhood. By preserving Cedar Valley's historical significance while implementing modern infrastructure upgrades and mixed-use developments, the City of Winchester aims to foster a thriving community that meets the diverse needs of its residents. The successful transformation of Cedar Valley will not only enhance the quality of life for its inhabitants but also set a benchmark for future planning initiatives in the region.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose

In 2023, the City of Winchester began planning the redevelopment of strategically chosen areas through the Neighborhood Design Districts process. This initiative will guide the City's effort to proactively revitalize neighborhoods by incorporating a mix of residences, businesses, and open spaces that promote residents' well-being.

A Neighborhood Design District (NDD) is a way of "pre-planning" a potential development area and adjacent parcels into a cohesive district. Rather than waiting for developers to deliver quality PUDs that reflect community needs, a Neighborhood Design District proactively rezones parcels with the Comprehensive Plan and market demands in mind. Additionally, each district incorporates design guidelines that reflect the community's intent. These design elements can help establish each area as a distinct place and help developers plan their projects.

Infrastructure should be proactively planned and funded more efficiently to keep up with future development. The NDD plans will identify what public improvements might be needed and a mechanism for funding them over the long term.

Ultimately, four NDDs will be created through this process. As of August 2024, two districts have been planned: The *Cider Hill* district in Ward 1 and the *Cedar Valley* district in Ward 4.

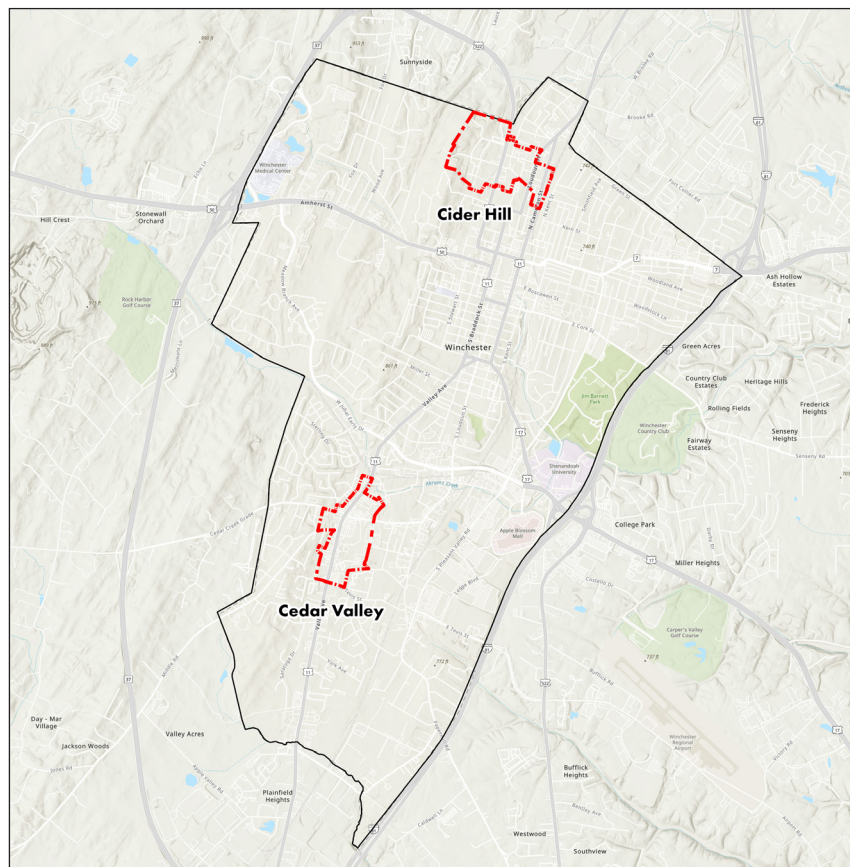


Figure 1: Neighborhood Design Districts as of August 2024

How to Use the Plan

This document summarizes the planning process, existing conditions, and project outcomes to guide the study area's future development. It includes a phasing plan for the area's future development and a list of public improvements that could be incorporated into future Tax Increment Financing (TIF) implementation. It also includes additional visualizations, including 3D renderings of the future development area.

Study Area Boundaries

The Cedar Valley study area consists of approximately 107 acres surrounding the intersections of Valley Avenue and Cedar Creek Grade/Weems Lane, including the current Ward Plaza site (see Map 1).



LEGEND

-  Cedar Valley Study Area
-  Ward Plaza



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NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DISTRICTS

Map 1: Cedar Valley Study Area



Figure 2: Cedar Valley Study Area

The Planning Process

The planning process took place in six phases:



Figure 3: The Planning Process

Two groups guided the Neighborhood Design District planning process:

- A **Support Team** involved in planning the districts. It included City Staff, market consultants, designers, and zoning experts.
- A **Neighborhood Design District Advisory Committee** for each district, consisting of four members of the public, two city councilors, one planning commissioner, and one EDA board member.

Summary of Outcomes

The Cedar Valley planning process has culminated in a comprehensive and forward-looking plan to revitalize a key area of the city. Efforts included community engagement, collaborative advisory meetings, and detailed planning and design work. This summary highlights the key outcomes of this process.

Enhanced Connectivity

One of the primary goals of the planning process was to improve connectivity within the district, resulting in recommendations for shared use paths and pedestrian streets to promote walking and cycling. Additionally, strategic curbside parking was recommended along major routes to support local businesses and enhance traffic calming. The plan also recommends improvements to transportation infrastructure, including the addition of multi-purpose trails along key routes like Middle Road and Hope Drive, and the incorporation of pedestrian-friendly features throughout the district's design.

Mixed-Use Development

The plan emphasizes the integration of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces to create a vibrant urban environment by developing higher-density mixed-use buildings with ground-floor commercial spaces along Valley Avenue and other major thoroughfares. It also promotes a balanced community by recommending space for higher-density residential units, commercial buildings, and single-family homes, fostering diversity and cohesion within the district.

Creation of Public Spaces

Public spaces were a crucial aspect of the planning process, focusing on enhancing community well-being and aesthetic appeal through the development of small pocket parks throughout the district and a large central park integrated into the Ward Plaza redevelopment. Additionally, landscaped green corridors were recommended to connect different parts of the district and provide recreational spaces, further enriching the community's environment.

Ward Plaza Redevelopment

A significant focus of the planning process was the redevelopment of Ward Plaza, transforming it into a mixed-use area that integrates residential, commercial, and public spaces. This redevelopment should include the incorporation of parks, community centers, and recreational facilities, enhancing Ward Plaza's role as a community hub.

Chapter 2: Existing Site Conditions

Overview

The Cedar Valley NDD encompasses the area surrounding Valley Avenue and Weems Lane, including the historic Ward Plaza. Due to its strategic location and existing infrastructure, this area has significant potential for redevelopment.

District Background and History

Early History

The area now known as Cedar Valley has a rich history that dates to the early development of Winchester. Due to its strategic location near major transportation routes, this area has been a hub for commercial activity for decades. The district has evolved over the decades, adapting to the changing needs and demographics of the community.

Establishment of Ward Plaza

Ward Plaza, a significant landmark within the Cedar Valley NDD, was officially opened in October 1964. This development marked a pivotal moment in Winchester's commercial landscape. The new Montgomery Ward Plaza, as it was called at the time, replaced the previously existing Winchester Park and Shop shopping center.

Features of Ward Plaza

Ward Plaza was designed to be a comprehensive shopping destination. Additionally, it featured an auto service and sales center and a seasonal sales area. The establishment of Ward Plaza significantly boosted the local economy and provided a modern shopping experience for Winchester residents.

Evolution

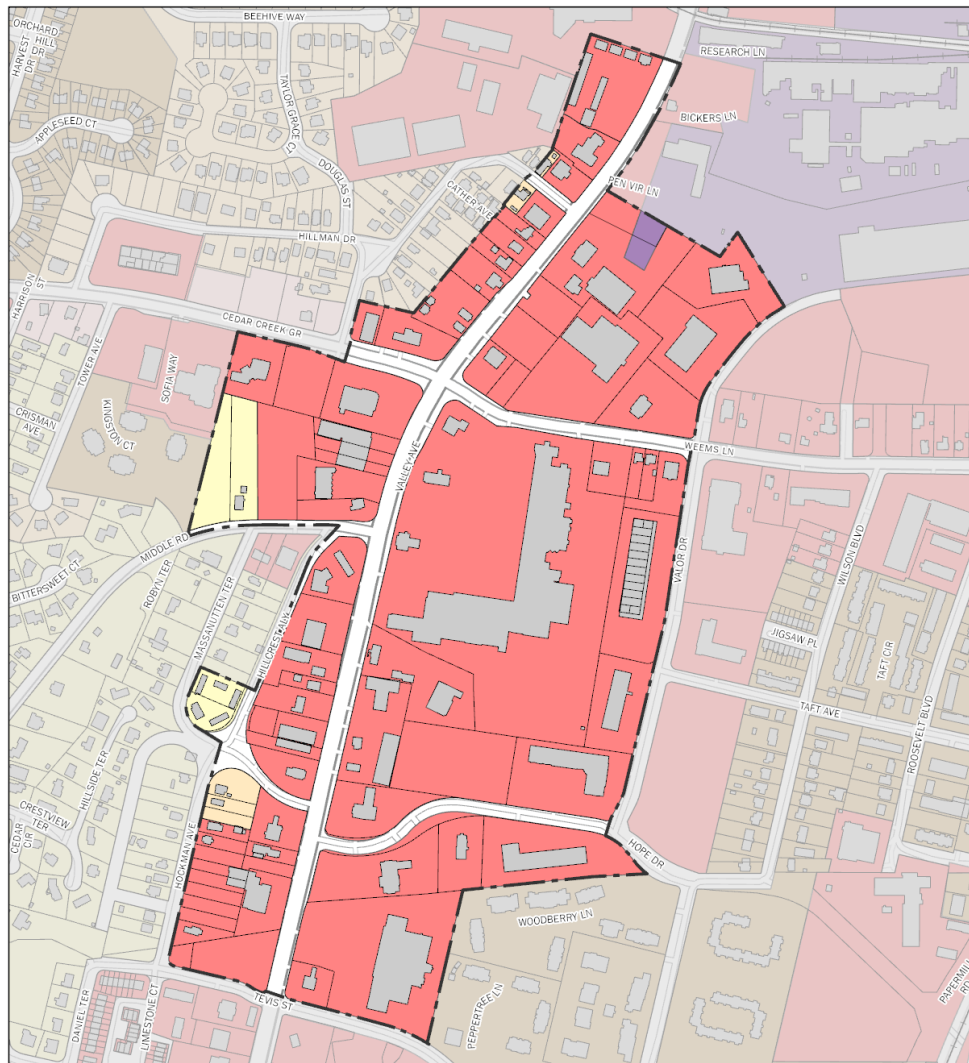
Over the years, Ward Plaza has undergone several transformations to adapt to the



changing retail environment and community needs. However, like many suburban shopping centers built in the mid-20th century, it has faced challenges such as declining foot traffic and competition from newer retail formats.

Existing Land Use Patterns

Currently, the Cedar Valley NDD is predominantly zoned for commercial use, with some residential and industrial areas. Most of the parcels in the district are zoned B2 (Highway Commercial District). A handful of parcels west of Valley Avenue are currently zoned LR (Low Density Residential District), and a small portion north of Weems Lane is zoned M2 (Intensive Industrial District). Most parcels in the surrounding areas are currently zoned LR, HR, or MR (Medium-density Residential District). Refer to Map 2, which shows existing zoning districts in and around the study area.



LEGEND

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ■ B2, Highway Commercial District | ■ LR, Low Density Residential District | ■ R01, Residential Office District |
| ■ EIP, Education/Institution/Public Use District | ■ M2, Intensive Industrial District | ■ Buildings |
| ■ HR, High Density Residential District | ■ MR, Medium Density Residential District | Cedar Valley Study Area |

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NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DISTRICTS

Map 2: Existing Zoning

Infrastructure and Services

The Cedar Valley area includes a variety of existing infrastructures and services that provide a foundation for its planned redevelopment. This section outlines the current state of transportation, utilities, public services, and other critical infrastructure within the district.

Transportation Infrastructure

Road Network

The Cedar Valley NDD is served by a network of major and minor roads that facilitate vehicular movement within and through the area:

- **Valley Avenue (U.S. Route 11):** A major arterial road running north-south, providing significant connectivity but currently dominated by vehicular traffic with limited pedestrian amenities.
- **Weems Lane:** An important east-west connector that intersects Valley Avenue and supports local traffic within the district.
- **Hope Drive:** A key road featuring a multi-use trail and green spaces, enhancing connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists while linking major thoroughfares and supporting long-term infrastructure growth.
- **Middle Road and Cedar Creek Grade:** Additional roads that provide access to the surrounding residential and commercial areas.

Public Transportation

Bus service is available via WinReady's Valley Avenue bus route (highlighted in purple on Map 4) and its Trolley service (highlighted in green on Map 4).

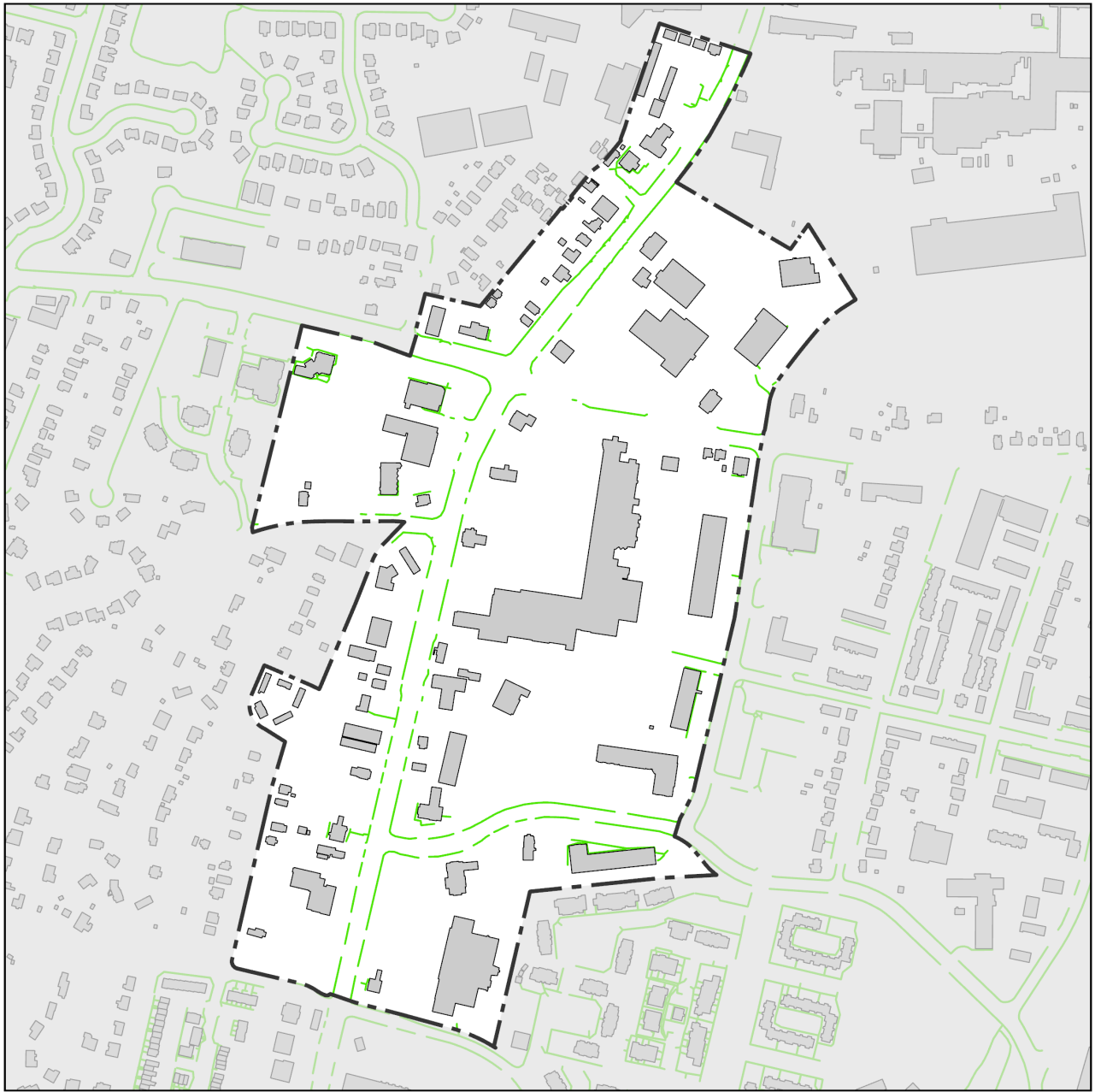
Utilities

Water and Sewer

Existing municipal water and sewer systems adequately serve the area (refer to Map 5). However, upgrades may be necessary to support the increased demand from new residential and commercial developments.

Electricity and Gas

Local utilities provide electricity and natural gas services, with infrastructure in place to meet current needs. Future redevelopment may require enhancements to the electrical grid and gas lines to accommodate higher consumption.



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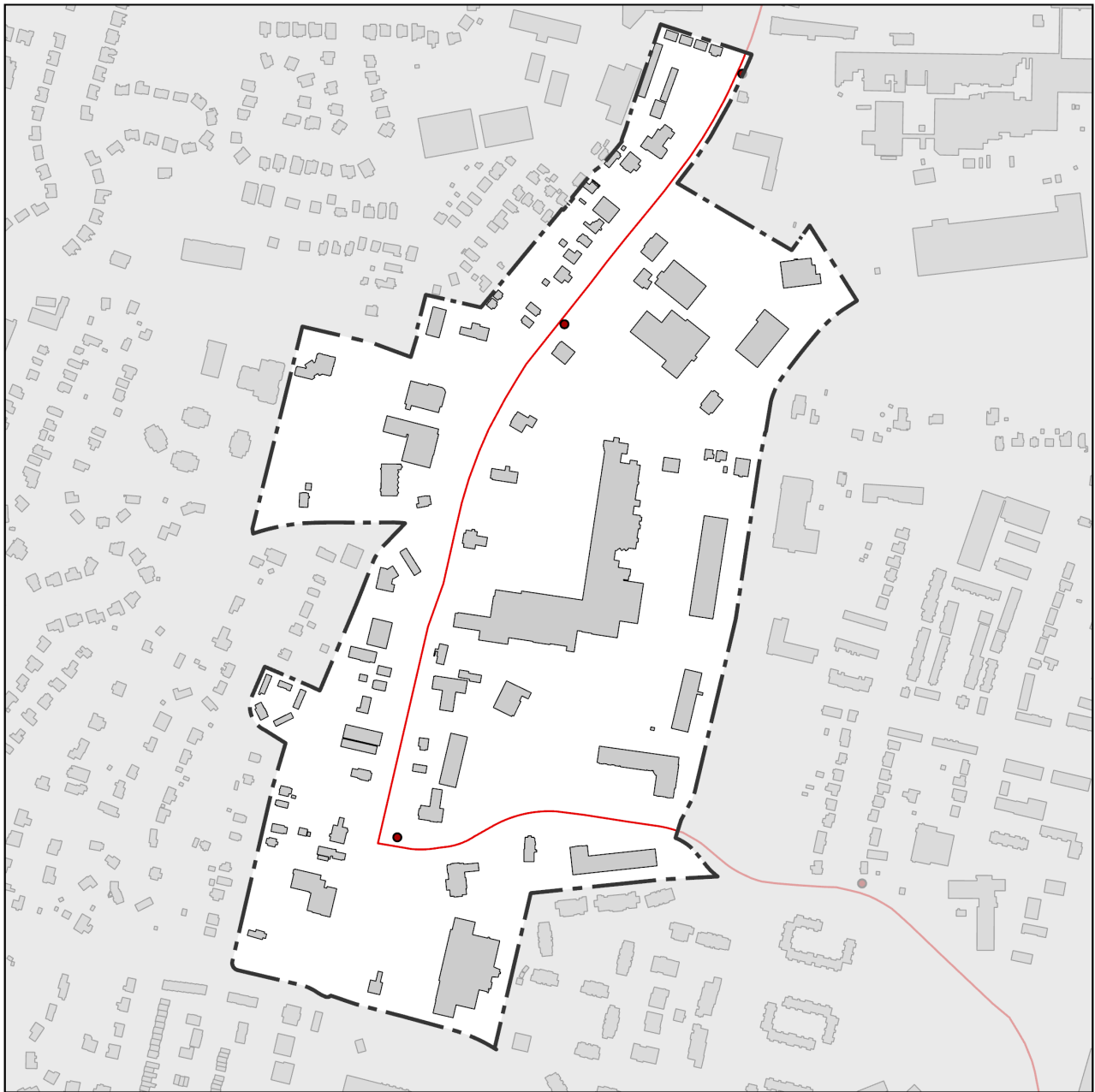
- Sidewalks
- Buildings
- Cedar Valley Study Area



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Map 3: Road Network and Pedestrian Infrastructure



LEGEND

- Buildings
- Cedar Valley Study Area
- WinReady Stops
- WinReady Loop



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NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DISTRICTS

Map 4: Public Transportation

Public Amenities and Services

Parks and Recreation

The district currently has no public green spaces or recreational facilities. The redevelopment plan aims to introduce parks, pocket parks, and recreational areas, significantly enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Commercial Services

The Ward Plaza area currently offers limited retail and dining options and has experienced a decline in recent years, highlighting the need for revitalization efforts. The proposed new grocery store in Ward Plaza aims to address this issue by providing residents with convenient access to essential goods and services, contributing to the overall improvement of the area's commercial landscape.

Residential Market Analysis

Residential market analysis conducted by the strategic economic development firm Fourth Economy provides an in-depth examination of the city's housing trends, demographics, and economic conditions to inform future development strategies. The analysis reveals that while Winchester's Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is experiencing growth, the city's population expansion is more modest, projected at only 4% from 2020 to 2030, which is below the state average. Additionally, the city's population is aging, with a significant increase in residents aged 65 and older, which is influencing labor force participation and overall employment rates.

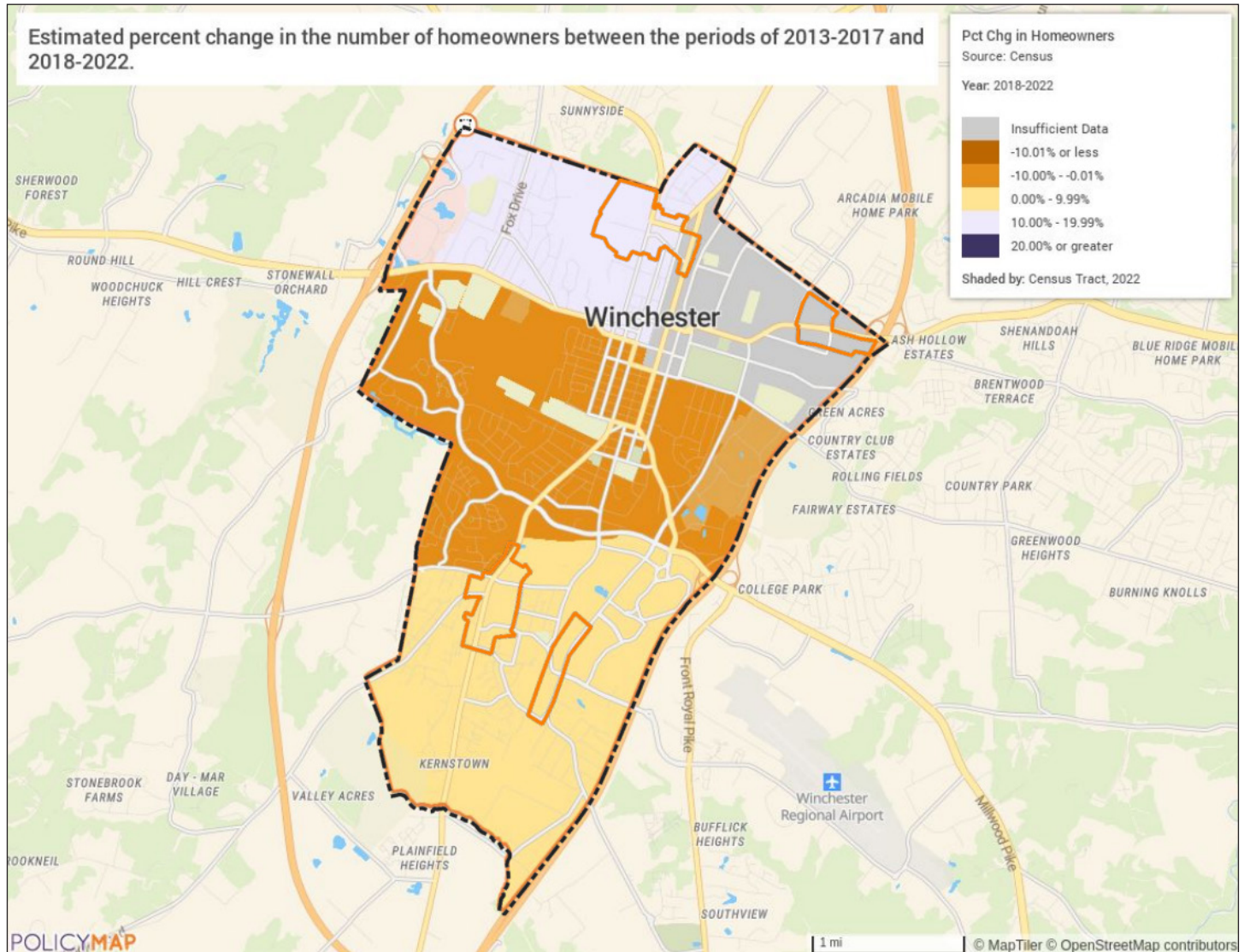
Winchester has seen a shift in housing dynamics, with a growing proportion of renters compared to homeowners. From 2010 to 2020, the share of homeowners declined by 3 percentage points, while the share of renters increased, a trend consistent with broader state patterns. Despite this shift, the city's median household income has risen by 36%, although it still lags behind the MSA and state averages. The analysis highlights a critical housing mismatch, where lower-income households struggle with affordability, while higher-income households often occupy units below their means, limiting availability for those with lower incomes.

The city's housing market faces challenges, including a shortage of higher-value ownership units and a need for more affordable rental options, particularly for the lowest and highest income brackets. Although there has been an increase in building permits for new housing units, with 259 new units added in 2022, Winchester still falls short of the projected number of units needed.

The Cedar Valley NDD is strategically positioned to address several critical gaps in Winchester's residential market as identified in the recent analysis by Fourth Economy. The NDD's development plan focuses on creating a diverse and balanced housing mix that caters to different income levels, which will directly respond to the housing mismatch and affordability issues highlighted in the report.

The NDD will introduce higher-value ownership units, which are currently in short supply within the city. By incorporating upscale residential options within mixed-use developments, the NDD will attract higher-income households that are currently occupying lower-cost units, thereby freeing up more affordable housing for lower-income residents. This approach will help alleviate the competition for existing affordable units and ensure that housing availability is better aligned with residents' income levels.

Additionally, the Cedar Valley NDD’s phased development will contribute to the overall growth of the city’s housing stock, helping to meet the projected need for new housing units. By prioritizing both the quantity and quality of residential developments, the NDD will play a crucial role in supporting Winchester’s modest population growth and mitigating the impacts of an aging population on the housing market. This strategic approach to residential development will ensure that the Cedar Valley NDD supports balanced and sustainable growth in Winchester’s housing sector, addressing key challenges and gaps in the current market.



Map 5: Homeownership. Source: PolicyMap | ACS 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Note: the location of two other proposed NDDs are included in this map, but have not been finalized.

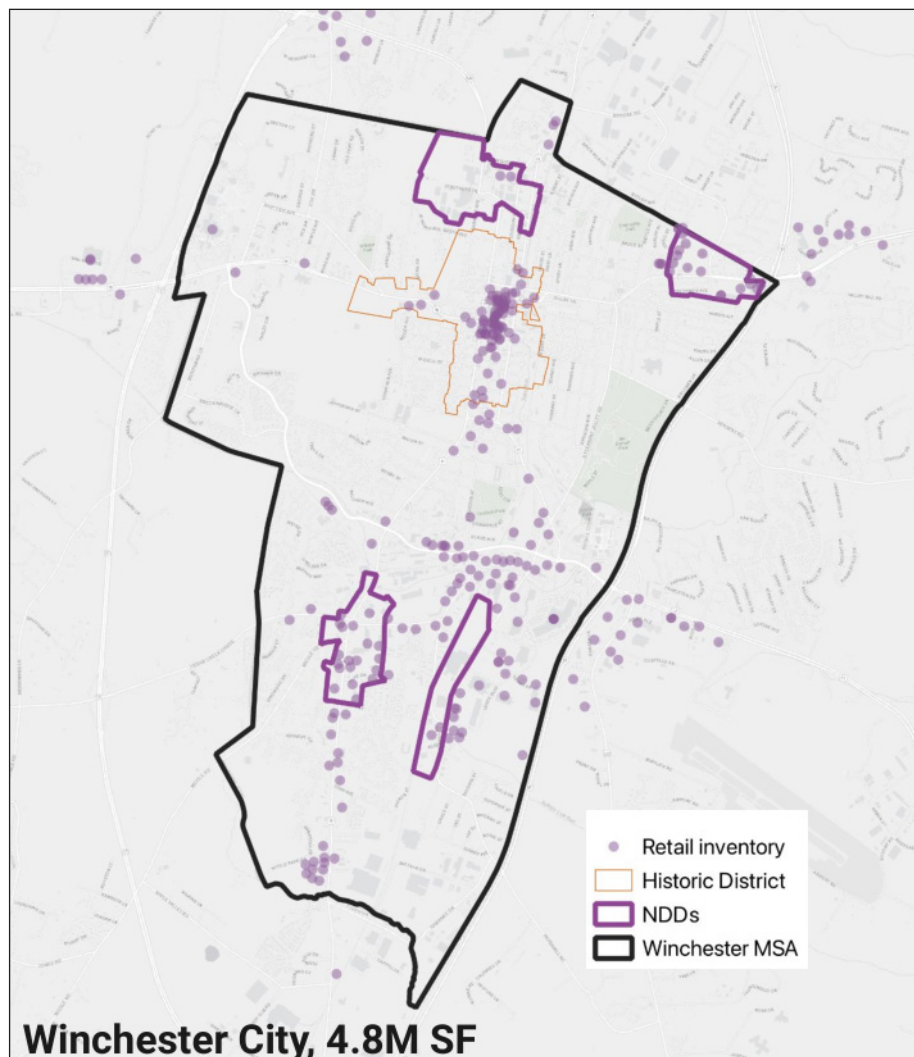
Commercial Market Analysis

Fourth Economy’s commercial market analysis provides an overview of Winchester’s office, retail, and hotel sectors, highlighting current trends, inventory, and future demand projections. Winchester City dominates the office market within the Winchester, VA-WV Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), holding 63% of the region’s office space. The majority of this space is older, with Class B offices making up 71% of the inventory. Despite a 9% increase in office rents over the last five years, vacancy rates have begun to rise since 2022, indicating potential shifts in market dynamics. Projections suggest that Winchester will need an additional 126,000 to 168,000 square feet of office space by 2025, with demand increasing to as much as 401,000 square feet by 2040.

In the retail sector, Winchester also leads the region, holding 55% of the MSA's retail space. The city's retail vacancy rates have decreased significantly, from 8.2% in 2011 to 2.3% in 2024, while asking rents per square foot have risen by 19% since 2010. Winchester is projected to need approximately 290,000 square feet of additional retail space by 2030, expanding to 520,000 square feet by 2040, underscoring its role as a regional retail destination.

The hotel market in Winchester is similarly robust, with the city accounting for 88% of the MSA's hotel rooms. Although most of the hotels are older, the market has shown positive trends in occupancy rates, which have increased from 49% in 2014 to 57% in 2024. Revenue per available room (RevPAR) and average daily rates (ADR) have also seen significant growth, with RevPAR increasing by 28% and ADR by 24% over the past six years. This indicates a steady demand for hotel accommodations, with projections suggesting the need for 70 to 80 new rooms by 2030 and up to 140 additional rooms by 2040.

The Cedar Valley NDD will further solidify Winchester's position as a regional commercial hub by adding to the city's retail space inventory. The district's focus on mixed-use developments will likely introduce new retail opportunities, helping to meet the projected demand of 290,000 square feet by 2030 and 520,000 square feet by 2040. This expansion will support the continued decrease in retail vacancy rates and help maintain the city's competitive edge in the regional market.



Map 6: Existing Retail Space Inventory: Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of CoStar Data. Note: the location of two other proposed NDDs are included in this map, but have not been finalized.

Chapter 3: Illustrative Vision



CONCEPT PLAN

LEGEND

- Study Area
- Mixed Use Building
- Commercial Building
- High Density Residential
- High Density Residential with Nonresidential Ground Floor Use
- Medium Density Residential
- Single Family Homes
- Structured Parking
- Clubhouse / Rec. Building
- Surface Parking
- Landscaping / Screening
- Pocket Park / Open Space
- Landscaped Corridors
- Shared Use Path
- Pedestrian Street

Map 7: Cedar Valley Concept Plan

Concept Plan

The future vision for the Cedar Valley Area is one of transformation. The vision includes public improvements and private redevelopment of sites over the long term. Cedar Valley is intended to be a mixed-use activity center with walkable neighborhoods, including housing, shopping, restaurants, community amenities, and gathering spaces. Refer to Map 7 for a detailed concept plan for the long-term future of Cedar Valley.

Pulsed Development

“Pulsed development” involves strategically phasing and clustering development activities to create vibrant, active nodes within the district. This approach helps to ensure continuous and sustainable growth while enhancing the overall appeal and functionality of the neighborhood. Below are key aspects of this strategy.



Figure 4: Pulsed Development in Cedar Valley

Key Principles of Pulsed Development

Creating Nodes of Activity

The concept involves developing distinct areas or “pulses” within the district where activity is concentrated. These nodes can include mixed-use developments, commercial centers, and public spaces that draw people and encourage continuous use.

Gradual and Sustainable Growth

Development is phased to match market demand and community needs. This avoids overbuilding and ensures that each development phase is viable and sustainable. It allows for adjustments based on feedback and changing circumstances.

Improving Connectivity and Walkability

This strategy emphasizes the importance of creating a connected, walkable urban environment. It includes adding new streets, pedestrian paths, and multi-use trails to ensure each node is easily accessible. Enhancing connectivity also involves integrating transportation options like bike lanes and improved bus stops.

Enhancing Public Spaces

Public parks, pocket parks, and landscaped areas are integrated into the development nodes to provide recreational opportunities and enhance the quality of life for residents. These green spaces serve as gathering points and contribute to the aesthetic appeal of the district.

Mixing Uses

Ensuring a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses within each development pulse helps to create a balanced, self-sustaining community. This strategy's key components are mixed-use buildings with ground-floor commercial spaces and upper-floor residential units.

Yield Analysis

The Cedar Valley plan outlines potential development estimates for residential, mixed-use, and commercial spaces once the district is fully built out. These figures represent estimates based on current planning data:

- **Single-Family Homes:** 7 units
- **Medium-Density Residential (townhomes):** 673 units
- **High-Density Residential (apartments or condos):** 1,150 units across 23 buildings
- **Nonresidential Ground Floor Use in Residential Buildings:** 110,000 sq. ft. across 13 buildings
- **Mixed-Use (retail/office/residential mix):** 140,000 sq. ft. across 10 buildings
- **Commercial (small office or retail):** 160,000 sq. ft. across 27 buildings

Land Use Components

The concept plan for Cedar Valley incorporates a balanced mix of land uses to create a vibrant and functional urban environment. These land use components are described in the following section.

High-Density Residential

High-density residential buildings in the Cedar Valley district are intended to maximize housing availability while integrating seamlessly with the neighborhood's commercial and recreational elements. Below are the locations and features of these high-density residential buildings:

Locations

Valley Avenue and Weems Lane

High-density residential buildings with nonresidential ground floor uses should predominantly be situated along Valley Avenue, creating a transition between commercial zones and other residential areas. This placement ensures that residents have easy access to retail, dining, and services located on the ground floors of mixed-use buildings.

Ward Plaza Development

The Ward Plaza area should feature significant high-density residential developments. This includes multifamily units integrated into the mixed-use buildings within the plaza, ensuring a vibrant and active environment.

Features

Mixed-Use Integration

Many high-density residential buildings should have commercial spaces on the ground floor. This integration supports the concept of a live-work-play environment, reducing the need for residents to travel long distances for daily necessities and services.

Housing Diversity

The high-density residential buildings should include a mix of housing types such as townhomes, "1 over 1" units, and multifamily

apartments. This diversity caters to various demographic groups, from single professionals to families. Multifamily units in Ward Plaza, for example, should include smaller and larger apartments to accommodate different household sizes and needs.

Parking and Accessibility

These developments should feature structured parking solutions to support the high residential density without compromising the pedestrian-friendly environment. Adequate parking space for residential and commercial units is carefully planned to ensure convenience and accessibility for all users.

Public and Recreational Spaces

Public amenities such as parks, pocket parks, and landscaped corridors should complement high-density residential areas. These green spaces provide recreational opportunities and enhance the overall livability of the district. For example, a central park is planned to serve the new neighborhoods within the NDD, providing residents with accessible recreational space.

Medium-Density Residential

Medium-density residential buildings in Cedar Valley should be strategically located to balance the transition between high-density cores and lower-density peripheries. These buildings are designed to offer a variety of housing types integrated with open spaces and community amenities while emphasizing connectivity and sustainability. This approach aims to create vibrant, livable neighborhoods that cater to diverse residential needs and promote a high quality of life.

Locations

Ward Plaza Development: Medium-density residential buildings are planned to be integrated within the Ward Plaza development.

Peripheral Zones of the District: Medium-density residential buildings should also be located along the peripheries of the high-density areas, acting as

a transition between the high-density core and the lower-density residential areas. These locations were chosen to provide a gradient of residential density that helps integrate various housing types seamlessly within the district.

Features

Residential Variety: Medium-density residential buildings should feature a variety of housing types, including townhouses and “1 over 1” units. These housing types provide more space and privacy than high-density apartments while maintaining an urban character supporting higher population densities.

Integrated Open Spaces: Green spaces and recreational areas such as pocket parks and landscaped corridors should complement these buildings. Including these open spaces should enhance the quality of life for residents by providing areas for recreation and relaxation.

Connectivity and Accessibility: The design of medium-density residential areas emphasizes connectivity, with easy access to pedestrian and bike paths that link to other parts of the district. For instance, new pedestrian streets and shared-use paths are planned to ensure that residents can easily access commercial areas, parks, and public amenities.

Community Amenities: These residential areas should also include community amenities such as clubhouses, community pools, and playgrounds, providing residents with social and recreational opportunities. These amenities are designed to foster a sense of community and improve the overall living experience.

Parking Solutions: Adequate parking facilities are planned to support medium-density residential areas. Structured parking solutions, such as multi-level parking decks, should ensure that parking needs are met without compromising the walkability and aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood.

Single-Family Residential

Traditional single-family homes that blend with the overall urban fabric, providing options for families seeking more private living spaces, should be located in select, limited areas to maintain neighborhood character and contribute to a variety of housing types.

Mixed Use

This plan strategically includes several mixed-use buildings to enhance the district’s connectivity, livability, and economic vibrancy. These buildings integrate residential, commercial, and recreational uses, creating a dynamic and multifunctional urban environment. Below is an overview of these mixed-use buildings’ key locations and features.

Locations

Valley Avenue Frontage

Several buildings along Valley Avenue are intended to be mixed-use with nonresidential ground floors. This placement aims to activate the street frontage and encourage pedestrian activity, contributing to a vibrant street life and supporting local businesses.

Ward Plaza

Ward Plaza is a significant focal point in the district, with mixed-use buildings planned on existing commercial sites.

Features

Ground Floor Commercial Use

Some mixed-use buildings should have commercial spaces on the ground floor, which can house various businesses such as retail stores, cafes, and service providers. This design encourages foot traffic and supports local commerce while providing amenities for residents and visitors.

Residential Units

The upper floors of some buildings should be residential, offering a mix of housing options. Integrating residential spaces above commercial

units ensures a constant presence of people in the area, enhancing safety and vibrancy. These residential units may include various housing types, such as townhomes and multifamily apartments, catering to diverse population segments and promoting social diversity.

Public Amenities and Green Spaces

The mixed-use buildings should be complemented by public parks, pocket parks, and landscaped corridors, providing green spaces for relaxation and recreation. These amenities are designed to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Connectivity and Accessibility

Mixed-use buildings are strategically located to improve connectivity within the district. For instance, the concept plan includes pedestrian streets and multi-use trails, ensuring easy and safe movement for pedestrians and cyclists. The plan also includes infrastructure improvements such as curbside parking and traffic calming measures to make the area more pedestrian-friendly and safe.

Commercial

The commercial land use component of Cedar Valley is a crucial aspect of the area's revitalization strategy. It aims to transform the existing suburban commercial strips into vibrant, mixed-use environments that foster economic growth and community engagement.

The plan envisions the integration of commercial buildings with residential and recreational spaces, creating a dynamic urban fabric that supports local businesses and provides diverse amenities for residents. By incorporating modern design principles and prioritizing walkability and connectivity, the commercial zones should serve as the heartbeat of Cedar Valley, promoting a sustainable and thriving community.

Locations

Ward Plaza

Ward Plaza is a central location for commercial

development within Cedar Valley. It includes a significant portion of the planned commercial space, featuring retail and a grocery store. This area is intended to serve as a primary commercial hub for the district, providing essential services and amenities to residents and visitors.

Valley Avenue Frontage

Commercial buildings are strategically placed along Valley Avenue to create an active street frontage. This placement helps to integrate commercial activities into the everyday flow of the neighborhood.

Peripheral Commercial Zones

Additional commercial areas are located on the peripheries of the district, particularly on Cedar Creek Grade and adjacent streets. These zones provide additional commercial opportunities and help to spread economic activities throughout the neighborhood, ensuring accessibility from various residential areas.

Features

Mixed-Use Integration

Many commercial buildings are part of mixed-use developments, especially those in Ward Plaza and along Valley Avenue. These buildings typically feature commercial spaces on the ground floors with residential units above, creating a vibrant, multifunctional environment.

Retail and Grocery Anchors

The commercial plan includes significant retail spaces, including a large grocery store in Ward Plaza. These anchors are essential for drawing regular foot traffic to the area, ensuring a steady flow of customers for smaller businesses, and enhancing the commercial viability of the district.

Walkability and Accessibility

Commercial buildings are designed to be pedestrian-friendly, with features such as wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and easy access to public transportation. The goal is to create a walkable commercial district.

Architectural and Landscaping Guidelines

The commercial buildings should follow specific architectural and landscaping guidelines to ensure aesthetic appeal and functionality. These guidelines include transparent façades, attractive landscaping, and pedestrian-scale designs that make the commercial areas inviting and comfortable for users. Features such as landscaped buffers and public plazas are incorporated to enhance these spaces' visual appeal and usability.

Parking Solutions

Adequate parking should support commercial activities, including structured parking decks and designated curbside pickup spaces. This ensures that customers have convenient access to businesses while maintaining the pedestrian-friendly nature of the district.

Community-Oriented Spaces

Public and recreational spaces are integrated within commercial zones to provide places for community gatherings and events. These spaces are designed to be accessible to all residents, enhancing the communal aspect of the district.

Public and Recreational Spaces

Public and recreational spaces in the Cedar Valley district are designed to enhance quality of life for residents by providing accessible, green, and multifunctional areas.

Locations

Ward Plaza

A central public park is planned within Ward Plaza to serve as a focal point for community activities. This park should be designed to accommodate various recreational uses and community events.

Valley Avenue

Several pocket parks are planned at key intersections along Valley Avenue. These small parks should provide green space for relaxation and socializing, contributing to the district's overall walkability and aesthetic appeal.

Hope Drive

Excess right-of-way (ROW) along Hope Drive should be converted into landscaped areas, creating linear parks that enhance the streetscape and provide green buffers between transportation corridors and residential/commercial buildings.

Floodplain Area at Pen Vir Lane

The floodplain area at Pen Vir Lane is proposed to be transformed into a natural area or pocket park. This will help manage stormwater while providing a natural recreational space for residents.

Features

Green Spaces and Landscaping

Public spaces in Cedar Valley should feature extensive landscaping, including tree-lined medians and landscaped buffers to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the district.

Multi-Use Trails and Connectivity

A network of multi-use trails is planned throughout the district to improve connectivity. These trails will link various neighborhoods, parks, and commercial areas, promoting active transportation such as walking and cycling.

Recreational Facilities

The public park in Ward Plaza may include facilities like futsal courts, which are compact and versatile sports fields suitable for urban areas. These facilities will provide recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.

Community Amenities

The district will include community amenities such as clubhouses, playgrounds, and community pools. These amenities are designed to foster social interaction and provide recreational options within walking distance of residential areas.

Public Events and Plazas

Spaces for public events and gatherings are integrated into the design of Ward Plaza and other key locations. These spaces should host community events, farmers' markets, and other activities that bring residents together and foster a sense of community.

Sustainable Design

The design of public and recreational spaces emphasizes sustainability. For instance, stormwater management facilities may be incorporated into parks to handle runoff in an environmentally friendly manner.



Figure 5: Proposed Pocket Parks from Concept Plan

Design Elements and Transportation Concepts

This section outlines a comprehensive approach to creating a connected, safe, and accessible urban environment. Central to this approach are various corridor types, each tailored to accommodate different modes of transportation and urban activities.



Figure 6: Future Vision for the Intersection of Valley Avenue and Weems Lane.

Corridors

This plan includes several corridor types designed to enhance connectivity, safety, and accessibility while promoting a vibrant, walkable urban environment. These corridors vary in function and design, catering to different modes of transportation and urban activities.

Boulevard Corridors

Boulevards are designed to handle higher traffic volumes while maintaining a pedestrian-friendly environment. They are major thoroughfares connecting different parts of the district and beyond. These corridors feature landscaped medians, wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and on-street parking. The design prioritizes multimodal transportation, accommodating vehicles and non-motorized users like cyclists and pedestrians.

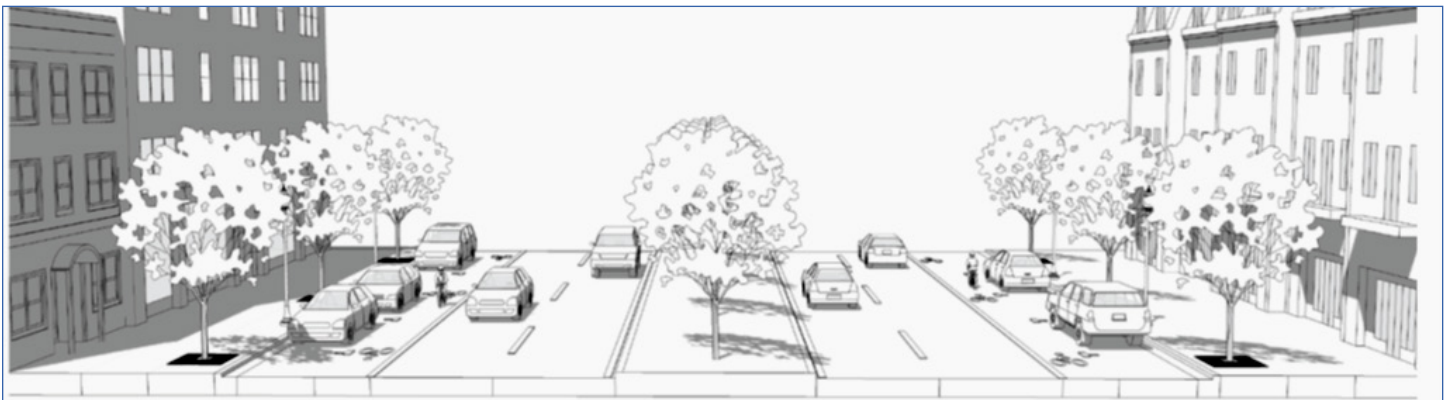


Figure 7: Boulevard Corridor Example

Major Avenues

Major avenues provide vital connections between neighborhoods and commercial areas, supporting both local and through traffic. These avenues are similar to boulevards but without landscaped medians. They have wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and on-street parking, ensuring safe and efficient travel for all users.

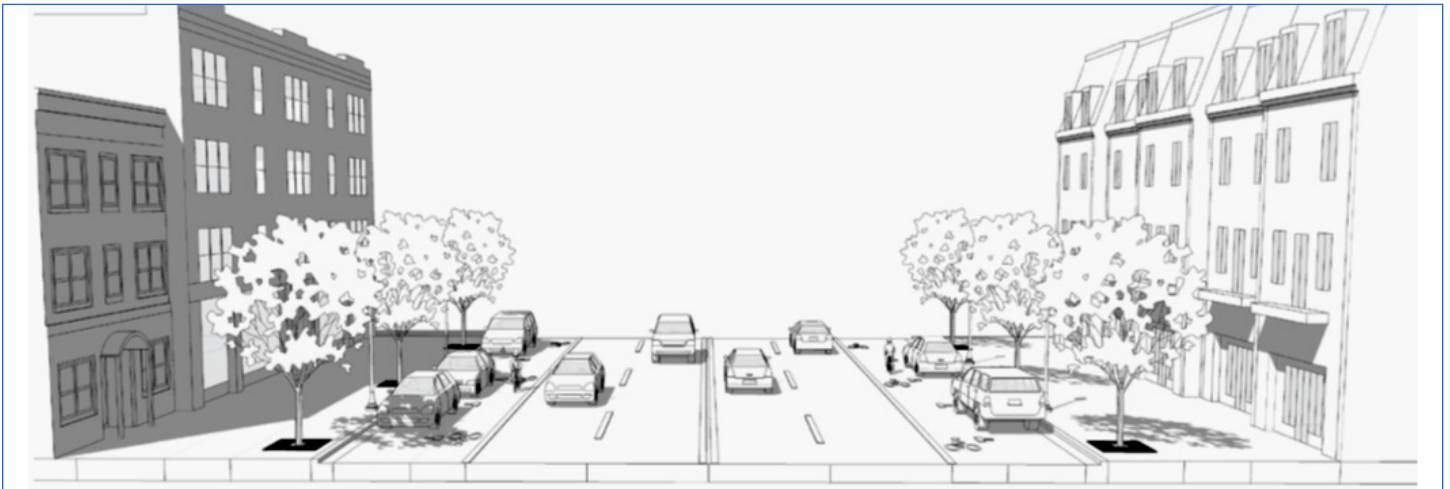


Figure 8: Major Avenue Example

Local Streets

Local streets serve residential neighborhoods, providing access to homes and local amenities while prioritizing pedestrian safety and comfort. These streets emphasize greenery, with tree lawns and broader setbacks. They include facilities for walking and biking and traffic calming measures to ensure a safe, low-speed environment.

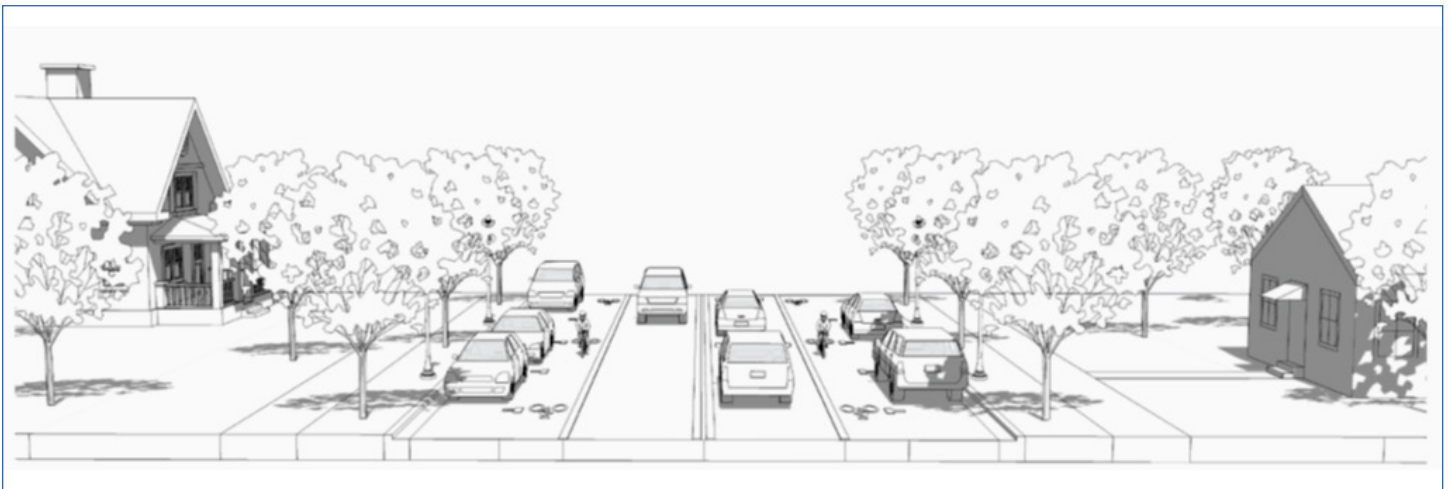


Figure 9: Local Street Example

Shared Use Paths

Shared use paths enhance connectivity across the district, linking parks, residential areas, and commercial zones. They promote active transportation and provide recreational opportunities. Multi-use trails are designed for walking, cycling, and other non-motorized transportation. These paths are typically separated from vehicular traffic and feature green buffers.

Pedestrian Streets

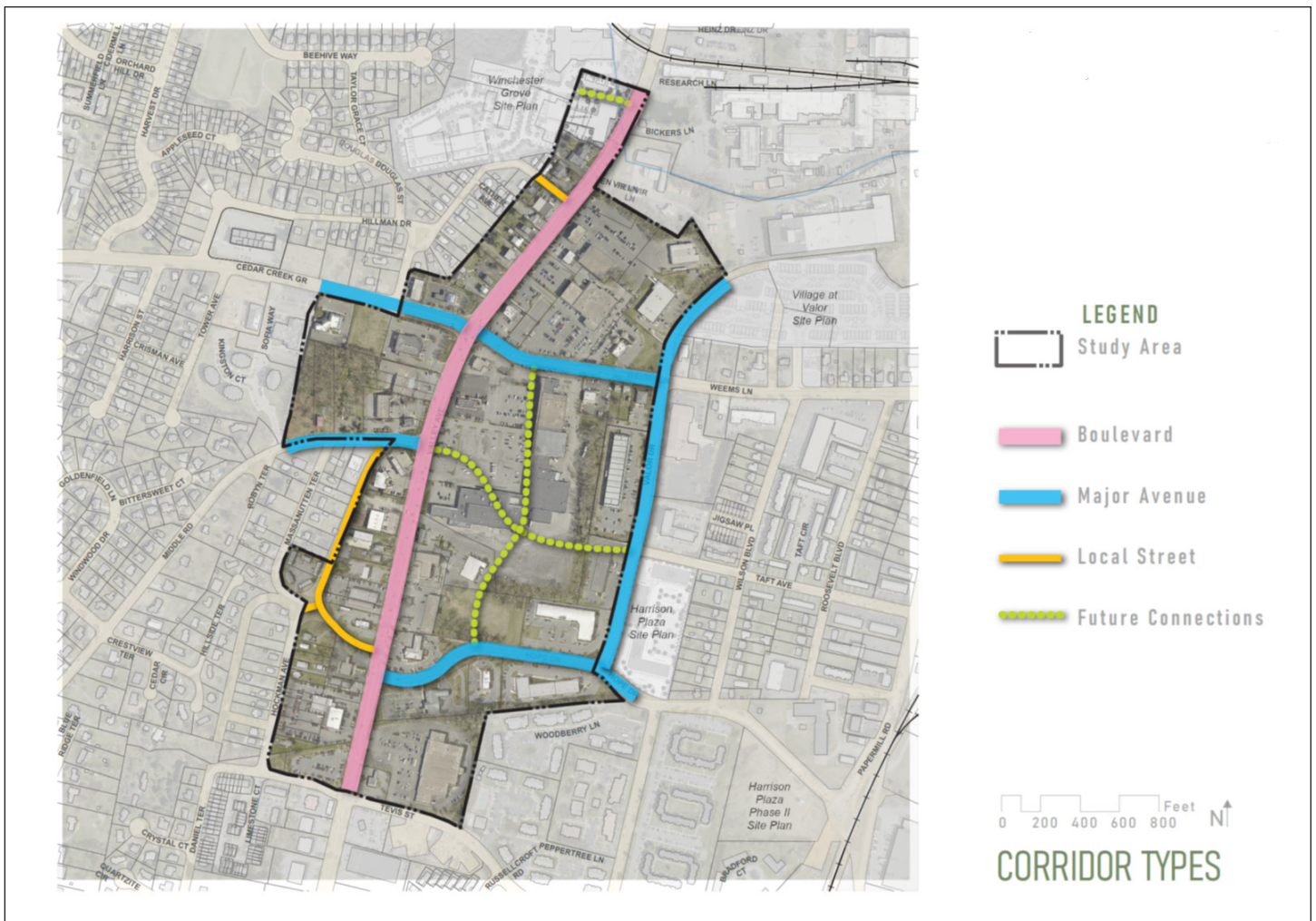
Pedestrian streets create vibrant public spaces that encourage walking and social interaction, enhancing the urban experience and supporting local businesses. Dedicated streets for pedestrian use, often located in high foot traffic areas. These streets may include amenities such as seating, landscaping, and public art.

Architectural Styles

Design elements should incorporate a mix of architectural styles that reflect the local character while maintaining a cohesive urban aesthetic. Buildings should enhance the pedestrian experience, featuring large windows, active street fronts, and human-scale proportions, ensuring a vibrant and engaging streetscape that resonates with the community's identity and fosters a sense of place.

Green Infrastructure

Cedar Valley's development should emphasize effective stormwater management by implementing green roofs, permeable pavements, and rain gardens to manage stormwater and reduce runoff. Extensive landscaping, including the use of trees, shrubs, and other plantings, will create a green, inviting environment, buffer different land uses, and enhance public spaces.



Map 7: Corridor Types

Road Network

Improving existing roads and creating new connections to ensure seamless movement within the district will enhance connectivity in Cedar Valley. Traffic calming measures, such as curbside parking and landscaped medians, will be implemented to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for all users.

Specific improvements outlined in the concept plan include:

- A new roadway connection to Valley Ave. at Cather Ave.,
- A new pedestrian street to connect Cedar Creek Grade to Winchester Grove,
- A new grid of streets at Ward Plaza,
- A new roadway extension of Hillman Dr. to add connectivity, and
- Correcting the offset intersection at Hope Dr. and Massanutten Terrace.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure

Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in Cedar Valley includes the development of shared use paths, which are multi-use trails designed to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists, thereby promoting active transportation. Additionally, pedestrian-only streets will be created to encourage walking and support local businesses. Sidewalk improvements, including upgrades and expansions, can promote safe and accessible pedestrian routes throughout the district. Specific improvements outlined in the concept plan include shared use paths along Valley Avenue, Cedar Creek Grade, Middle Road., and Hope Drive.

Infrastructure Needs

Utilities

Water and sewer lines may need upgrading to accommodate the increased demand from new residential and commercial developments. Additionally, enhancements to the electrical grid and gas lines should support modern, energy-efficient technologies and increased consumption, ensuring reliable and sustainable utility services for the district.

Communication Networks

High-speed internet access should be available throughout the district to support residential, commercial, and educational needs.

Chapter 4: Implementation

Zoning Analysis

The NDD zoning ordinance is intended to allow a flexible mix of residential, commercial, and other uses, producing centers of activity that incorporate new and existing structures and attractive streetscapes and civic spaces. The ordinance aims to primarily allow for by-right development while retaining some control over the form of that development. It includes the following guidelines:

- Uses
- Conditional Uses
- Lot Width
- Setback
- Block Length
- Yards
- Height
- Residential Density
- Townhouses
- Façade Transparency
- Façade Articulation
- Civic Space

Existing businesses that do not conform to the design district's zoning will be grandfathered.

The comprehensive plan amendment for the Cedar Valley NDD is included in **Appendix A**, and a copy of the zoning ordinance for the Cedar Valley and Cider Hill NDDs is included in **Appendix B**.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a public financing method to promote economic development and redevelopment in designated areas. It captures the future increases in property tax revenues generated by the rise in property values due to redevelopment and uses those funds to finance the necessary improvements. TIF can be a powerful tool for revitalization, providing the financial resources needed for infrastructure upgrades, public amenities, and other key elements of the redevelopment plan.

TIF calls for local taxing bodies to jointly invest in the development or redevelopment of an area, intending that any short-term gains be reinvested and leveraged so that all taxing bodies will receive more considerable financial gains in the future. The funds for this investment come from future tax revenues not otherwise expected to occur, generated by increased public and private investment in identified, underperforming areas.

How TIF Works

When a TIF district is created, the sum of property values in the area is established as the “base” value of the project area. The property taxes paid on this base amount continue to go to the various taxing bodies as they always had, with the revenue declining only if the base declines (something that the TIF is expected to keep from happening) or if the tax rate goes down. The growth of the subject property’s value over the base value generates the tax increment, which is the difference between the amount of property tax revenue generated before TIF designation and the amount of property tax revenue generated after designation. This increment is collected into a special fund for the municipality to make additional investments in the TIF project area. Only these new tax revenues generated after the TIF district is designated can be made available for investment in public and private assets located within the district. This reinvestment generates additional growth in property value, which in turn results in even more revenue growth for reinvestment.

Ultimately, the incremental taxes paid into the TIF fund are due to increased property values paid by property owners within the TIF district. In most cases, these taxes are paid by property owners receiving the direct benefit of the City’s use of TIF to spur economic development and redevelopment in an area where such activity would be otherwise unlikely. In this way, the TIF redevelopment project creates a virtuous cycle, increasing development and redevelopment in the area. When the TIF project ends, all the taxing bodies will benefit from the increased property value, resulting in increased tax revenues from the new growth.

Benefits of Using TIF

- **Economic Growth:** TIF helps create a more attractive and functional urban environment by financing infrastructure and public amenities. This, in turn, attracts businesses and residents, stimulating economic growth within the district.
- **Increased Property Values:** Property values will likely rise as the district is redeveloped and improved, generating additional tax revenue to be reinvested into the community and creating a positive feedback loop of growth and improvement.
- **Leveraging Private Investment:** TIF can help attract private investment by reducing the financial risks associated with redevelopment projects. By funding critical infrastructure and public amenities, TIF makes the district more appealing to developers and businesses.

Eligible Projects for TIF Funds

In Virginia, eligible projects for TIF funds include public facilities including, but not limited to, roads, water, sewers, parks, and real estate devoted to open space within redevelopment and conservation areas to encourage private development in such areas to eliminate blighted conditions.

TIF Process in Virginia

Creating a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district in Virginia involves a detailed process governed by state statutes. Here is an overview of the steps involved, based on Virginia Code § 58.1-3245.2:

1. Preliminary Steps and Identification

- **Initial Assessment:** Local government officials identify a potential area for TIF designation. This

area must generally be “blighted” or underdeveloped.

- **Feasibility Study:** Conduct an economic feasibility study to assess the potential for redevelopment and the financial viability of creating a TIF district.

2. Drafting the TIF Plan

- **Plan Preparation:** Based on findings from the initial assessment and feasibility studies, specific boundaries for the TIF district are drawn, and the exact parcels of land to be included within the district are mapped out. The TIF plan is drafted, including boundaries, proposed redevelopment projects, and anticipated public benefits. The plan must also detail how the incremental tax revenues will be used to finance the improvements.

3. Public Involvement and Hearings

- **Public Notice:** Provide public notice of the intention to create a TIF district. This typically involves publishing notices in local newspapers and notifying affected property owners.
- **Public Hearings:** Hold public hearings to present the TIF plan and allow for community input. These hearings are crucial for transparency and gathering feedback from residents and stakeholders.

4. Approval by Local Governing Body

- **Local Approval:** The TIF plan, including the district boundaries, must be approved by the local governing body (e.g., city council or county board). This approval process may involve multiple readings and votes.
- **Resolution or Ordinance:** The governing body passes a resolution or ordinance formally establishing the TIF district and adopting the TIF plan.

5. Finalization and Implementation

- **Formal Designation:** Once approved, the TIF district is formally designated. The incremental tax revenue generated within the district is then allocated to the TIF fund.
- **Project Initiation:** Begin the development projects outlined in the TIF plan, using the TIF funds to finance infrastructure improvements and other redevelopment efforts.

By adhering to these steps and ensuring compliance with state laws, municipalities in Virginia can effectively create and manage TIF districts to promote economic development and revitalization. For more detailed information, refer to Virginia Code § 58.1-3245.2 and resources provided by the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA).

Where TIF Districts Work Well

- **Blighted Areas:** TIF districts are particularly effective in revitalizing blighted or economically distressed areas. The promise of future tax revenues can attract private investment that might not otherwise occur.

- **Infrastructure Projects:** TIF can successfully finance significant infrastructure projects to spur further economic development.
- **Mixed-use Developments:** Areas designated for mixed-use developments, combining residential, commercial, and retail spaces, often benefit substantially from TIF funding.

Where TIF Districts May Not Work

- **Already Thriving Areas:** In areas already experiencing growth and development, TIF districts may not be necessary and could divert needed tax revenues from other public services.
- **Poorly Defined Projects:** If the projects within the TIF district are not well-defined or aligned with community needs, the district may fail to achieve its goals.
- **Overreliance on TIF:** Municipalities that rely too heavily on TIF without a diversified economic development strategy may face financial challenges.

Threats and Challenges of TIF Districts

- **Financial Risk:** TIF districts can pose financial risks if projected increases in property values and tax revenues do not materialize. This can lead to budget shortfalls and increased debt.
- **Displacement and Gentrification:** Redevelopment efforts can sometimes lead to the displacement of existing residents and businesses, particularly low-income populations, due to rising property values and rents.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Ensuring transparency and accountability when using TIF funds is crucial. Mismanagement or lack of oversight can lead to public distrust and ineffective use of resources.

Application of TIF in Cedar Valley

The Cedar Valley NDD presents a unique opportunity for revitalization through strategic public improvements that can be supported by a TIF district. The following list outlines key public improvements that could be incorporated into future TIF district funding.

Infrastructure Upgrades

- **Utility Improvements:** Upgrades to water, sewer, and electrical systems to support increased density and new developments.
- **Street and Road Enhancements:** Resurfacing and expanding key thoroughfares, including the introduction of new intersections and roundabouts.
- **Stormwater Management Systems:** Installation of new stormwater facilities, including green infrastructure like permeable pavements and rain gardens.

Transportation Enhancements

- **Multi-Use Trails:** Development of shared-use paths for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly along key routes like Hope Drive and Middle Road.
- **Pedestrian Streets:** Creation of pedestrian-friendly streets and zones within the district to

enhance walkability.

- **Public Transit Infrastructure:** Improvements to bus stops and shelters, and potential future transit hubs within the district.

Public Space Development

- **Central Park:** Development of a large central park as a community hub, including landscaping, playgrounds, sports facilities, and green spaces.
- **Pocket Parks:** Creation of smaller pocket parks throughout the district to provide accessible green spaces for all residents.
- **Streetscaping:** Implementation of enhanced streetscapes, including street trees, decorative lighting, benches, and public art installations.

Public Facilities

- **Community Centers:** Construction or renovation of community centers to provide spaces for public meetings, recreational activities, and social services.
- **Public Safety Facilities:** Upgrades to fire stations, police precincts, and other public safety infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population.
- **Educational Facilities:** Potential development or expansion of schools or educational centers within the district.

Parking and Accessibility Improvements

- **Multi-Level Parking Structures:** Construction of parking decks to support increased density and reduce surface parking.
- **ADA Compliance Upgrades:** Ensuring all public spaces and facilities are fully accessible according to ADA standards.
- **Bicycle Infrastructure:** Installation of bike racks, repair stations, and designated bike lanes throughout the district.

Civic and Cultural Amenities

- **Civic Plazas:** Development of public plazas for community events, farmers markets, and cultural activities.
- **Historic Preservation:** Restoration and preservation of historically significant buildings and landmarks within the district.
- **Public Art Programs:** Funding for murals, sculptures, and other public art projects to enhance the district's cultural identity.

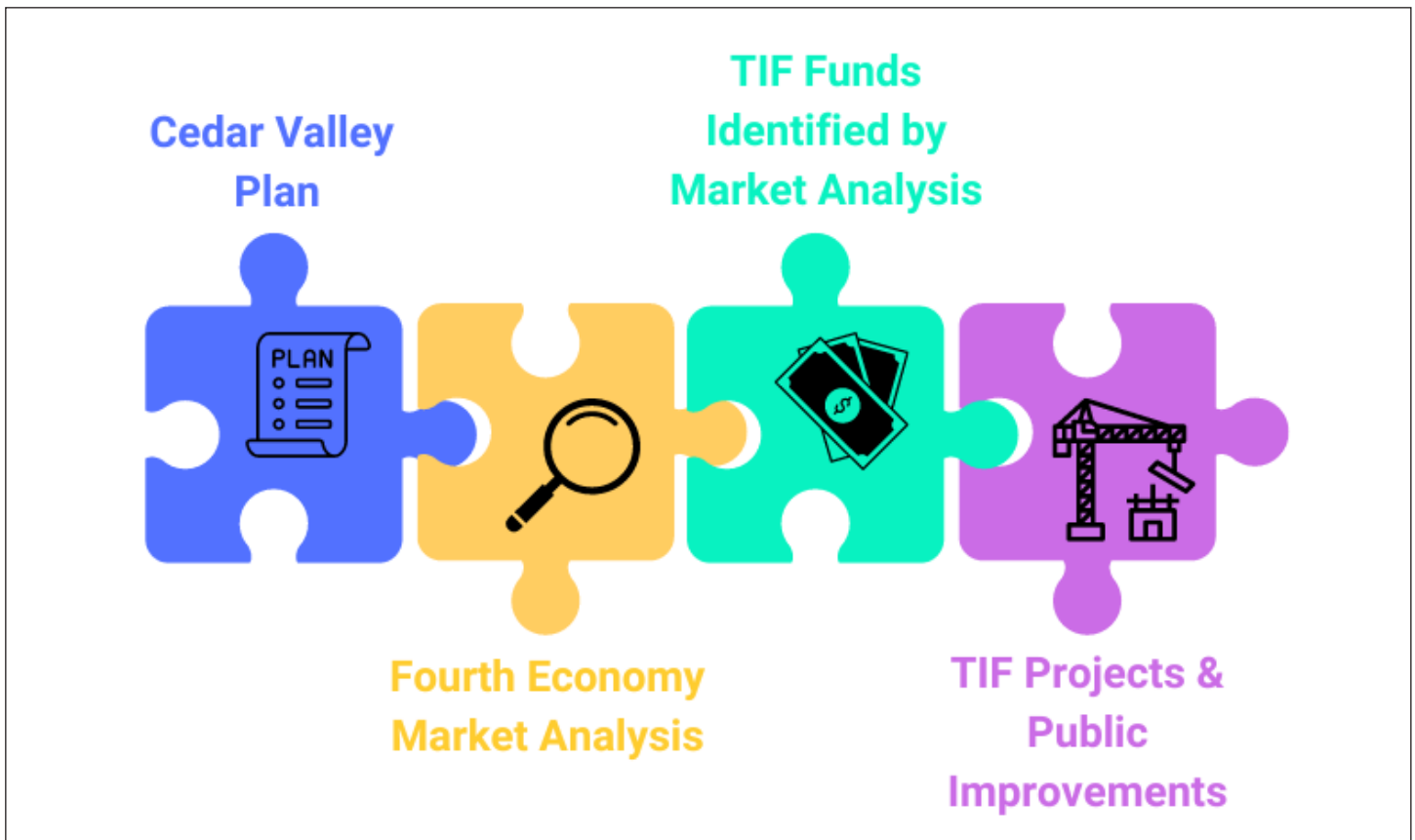


Figure 10: Implementation

Phasing

The phased development plan for the Cedar Valley district outlines a comprehensive approach to transforming the area into a vibrant, sustainable, and livable community over the coming decades. Phase 1 focuses on upgrading infrastructure, initiating pilot mixed-use developments, and enhancing public spaces with pocket parks. Phase 2 involves major construction projects, including high-density residential and commercial buildings, multi-use transportation projects, and the completion of a central park. Sustainability initiatives, such as green infrastructure and tree planting, will also be prioritized. Phase 3 envisions expanding the district’s boundaries, exploring new development opportunities, and continuing to improve transportation infrastructure, with a strong emphasis on long-term sustainability and community resilience.

Phase 1: Initial Development

Infrastructure Upgrades

- **Utilities:** Upgrade water, sewer, and electrical systems to support higher-density development throughout the district. This includes extending utilities to key mixed-use development sites within the district, particularly the planned development at Ward Plaza.
- **Streetscape Improvements:** Begin the installation of streetscape elements, including street trees, enhanced sidewalks, and crosswalks, particularly along Valley Avenue.

Pilot Projects

- **Mixed-Use Developments:** Initiate mixed-use residential and commercial development at Ward Plaza, including the grocery store anchor.
- **Public Space Enhancements:** Start with the creation of pocket parks in strategic locations identified during the planning process.

Phase 2: Mid-Term Development

Major Construction

- **High-Density Residential & Commercial Buildings:** Developers should be in the process of constructing large-scale mixed-use buildings throughout the district.
- **Transportation Projects:** Implement multi-use trails along Hope Drive and potentially along the north side of Middle Road, as well as create pedestrian streets in selected locations.
- **Parking Solutions:** Construct multi-level parking decks to support increased density and reduce surface parking.

Public Spaces

- **Central Park:** Complete the central park within the district, including amenities like playgrounds, walking paths, and possibly a futsal court or other multi-use sports facilities on top of parking structures.
- **Pocket Parks:** Finalize the development of pocket parks in various parts of the district to ensure all residents have access to green spaces.

Sustainability Initiatives

- **Green Infrastructure:** Incorporate green infrastructure in new developments, such as permeable pavements, rain gardens, and green roofs. Ensure that new buildings meet or exceed energy-efficient standards.
- **Tree Planting:** Enhance the medians and streetscapes with tree planting efforts to increase urban canopy cover, improving air quality and providing shade for pedestrians.

Phase 3: Long-Term Vision

District Expansion

- **Expansion Analysis:** Explore the potential for expanding the district boundaries to incorporate adjacent areas for further development, particularly commercial zones south of Cedar Creek Grade.
- **New Development Opportunities:** Plan for new residential and commercial developments in the expanded areas, with a focus on medical offices, townhouses, and mixed-use buildings.

Continued Growth

- **Ongoing Projects:** Support and adapt ongoing development projects based on emerging trends,

such as changes in housing demands or commercial needs. Regularly update the master plan to reflect these adjustments.

- **Transportation Enhancements:** Continue to improve transportation infrastructure, possibly including advanced transit options like autonomous vehicle lanes or expanded bike-sharing programs.

Sustainability Goals

- **Environmental Monitoring:** Implement long-term monitoring programs to assess the environmental impacts of the district, with a focus on air quality, energy consumption, and green space usage.
- **Community Resilience:** Develop strategies to enhance community resilience to climate change, including flood mitigation measures and heat island reduction efforts.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This plan outlines a strategic approach to revitalizing and developing the district over the coming decades. By focusing on phased development, this plan ensures that infrastructure upgrades, community needs, and sustainable growth are prioritized and balanced throughout the process. The phased approach also allows for flexibility in adapting to new opportunities and challenges, ensuring that the district remains vibrant, resilient, and aligned with the long-term vision of the community.

The plan's success hinges on active collaboration between public and private stakeholders, ongoing community engagement, and a commitment to sustainability. Each phase of development is carefully designed to build on the previous one, gradually transforming the Cedar Valley district into a thriving, mixed-use community that enhances the quality of life for all residents.

Next Steps

Finalize the Phasing Plan

- Present the plan to City Council and other relevant stakeholders for final approval.
- Secure necessary permits, funding, and partnerships to begin Phase 1 activities.
- Develop detailed implementation schedules for each phase, including key milestones and responsible parties.

Initiate Phase 1 Projects

- Begin infrastructure upgrades and pilot projects as outlined in Phase 1.
- Form partnerships with developers for mixed-use projects and public space enhancements.
- Start the process of securing funding for Phase 2 projects, including large-scale residential and commercial developments.

Plan Maintenance

This plan is a living document that requires continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment to remain relevant and effective. Annual reviews of the plan's progress should be conducted to assess whether milestones are being met and to identify any emerging challenges or opportunities. Staff should revisit the plan's goals and objectives every five years to ensure they align with the evolving needs of the community and broader urban development trends.

Through careful planning, ongoing engagement, and a commitment to sustainability, the Cedar Valley Neighborhood Design District will evolve into a vibrant, resilient community that meets the needs of its residents while preserving the character and charm of the area. This phasing plan provides the roadmap to achieve that vision, ensuring a thoughtful and deliberate approach to the district's development over the next two decades.

Appendix A: Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Introduction

The City of Winchester proposes this Comprehensive Plan amendment to incorporate the Cedar Valley Neighborhood Design District (NDD) Plan into its broader planning framework. The plan outlines a transformative vision for Cedar Valley, a 107-acre area encompassing key intersections such as Valley Avenue, Cedar Creek Grade, Hope Drive, Weems Lane, and the historic Ward Plaza site. The purpose of this amendment is to establish Cedar Valley as a mixed-use community that integrates residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, thereby enhancing the quality of life for residents and setting a standard for sustainable urban development in Winchester.

Objectives of the Cedar Valley NDD Plan

Revitalization of Strategic Areas

The Cedar Valley NDD Plan aims to revitalize key intersections and the underutilized Ward Plaza area by fostering a mixed-use urban environment. High-density residential buildings with ground-floor commercial spaces will be concentrated along Valley Avenue and Ward Plaza, creating a vibrant and dynamic live-work-play atmosphere.

Community Connectivity

The plan emphasizes improving transportation infrastructure with shared-use paths, pedestrian streets, and curbside parking to enhance accessibility. These changes aim to create a more walkable and cyclist-friendly neighborhood, fostering local businesses and supporting a more connected community.

Mixed-Use and Residential Development

A diverse mix of high- and medium-density housing options will be incorporated into the district. Medium-density areas will offer townhouses and “1 over 1” units with integrated open spaces, while high-density residential units will focus on supporting the district’s growing population.

Public Spaces and Recreation

The plan includes the development of public parks, green corridors, and recreational spaces. Central and pocket parks will be distributed throughout the neighborhood, promoting social interaction, physical activity, and environmental sustainability.

Historical Context

Ward Plaza has been a cornerstone of Cedar Valley’s commercial identity since its establishment in 1964. However, as the commercial landscape has evolved, the area has experienced a decline in use and prominence. The Cedar Valley NDD Plan seeks to preserve the district’s historical significance while reimagining its role in Winchester’s urban fabric, bringing a fresh, modernized approach to its development.

Phased Implementation

The implementation of the Cedar Valley NDD Plan will occur in multiple phases:

Phase 1: Initial Development

Infrastructure Upgrades

- **Utilities:** Upgrade water, sewer, and electrical systems to support higher-density development throughout the district. This includes extending utilities to key mixed-use development sites within the district, particularly the planned development at Ward Plaza.
- **Streetscape Improvements:** Begin the installation of streetscape elements, including street trees, enhanced sidewalks, and crosswalks, particularly along Valley Avenue.

Pilot Projects

- **Mixed-Use Developments:** Initiate mixed-use residential and commercial development at Ward Plaza, including the grocery store anchor.
- **Public Space Enhancements:** Start with the creation of pocket parks in strategic locations identified during the planning process.

Phase 2: Mid-Term Development

Major Construction

- **High-Density Residential & Commercial Buildings:** Developers should be in the process of constructing large-scale mixed-use buildings throughout the district.
- **Transportation Projects:** Implement multi-use trails along Hope Drive and potentially along the north side of Middle Road, as well as create pedestrian streets in selected locations.
- **Parking Solutions:** Construct multi-level parking decks to support increased density and reduce surface parking.

Public Spaces

- **Central Park:** Complete the central park within the district, including amenities like playgrounds, walking paths, and possibly a futsal court or other multi-use sports facilities on top of parking structures.
- **Pocket Parks:** Finalize the development of pocket parks in various parts of the district to ensure all residents have access to green spaces.

Sustainability Initiatives

- **Green Infrastructure:** Incorporate green infrastructure in new developments, such as permeable pavements, rain gardens, and green roofs. Ensure that new buildings meet or exceed energy-efficient standards.
- **Tree Planting:** Enhance the medians and streetscapes with tree planting efforts to increase urban

canopy cover, improving air quality and providing shade for pedestrians.

Phase 3: Long-Term Vision

District Expansion

- **Expansion Analysis:** Explore the potential for expanding the district boundaries to incorporate adjacent areas for further development, particularly commercial zones south of Cedar Creek Grade.
- **New Development Opportunities:** Plan for new residential and commercial developments in the expanded areas, with a focus on medical offices, townhouses, and mixed-use buildings.

Continued Growth

- **Ongoing Projects:** Support and adapt ongoing development projects based on emerging trends, such as changes in housing demands or commercial needs. Regularly update the master plan to reflect these adjustments.
- **Transportation Enhancements:** Continue to improve transportation infrastructure, possibly including advanced transit options like autonomous vehicle lanes or expanded bike-sharing programs.

Sustainability Goals

- **Environmental Monitoring:** Implement long-term monitoring programs to assess the environmental impacts of the district, with a focus on air quality, energy consumption, and green space usage.
- **Community Resilience:** Develop strategies to enhance community resilience to climate change, including flood mitigation measures and heat island reduction efforts.

Funding Mechanism: Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

To fund critical infrastructure and public space improvements, the Cedar Valley NDD Plan incorporates Tax Increment Financing (TIF). This mechanism captures the increase in property tax revenues resulting from rising property values due to new developments. TIF will play a key role in supporting the funding of transportation infrastructure, parks, and other public facilities necessary to transform Cedar Valley into a thriving urban district. The plan also addresses the potential risks of TIF, including financial shortfalls and concerns about displacement or gentrification, ensuring that these are carefully managed through continued community engagement and planning adjustments.

Conclusion

The Cedar Valley NDD Plan represents a forward-thinking strategy for urban revitalization in Winchester, setting the stage for future regional development. By integrating this plan into the City's Comprehensive Plan, the city commits to creating a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive community in Cedar Valley, ensuring that it meets the diverse needs of current and future residents. This amendment reflects a long-term vision of innovative urban development, placing Winchester at the forefront of smart city planning for the 21st century.



CONCEPT PLAN

LEGEND

- Study Area
- Mixed Use Building
- Commercial Building
- High Density Residential
- High Density Residential with Nonresidential Ground Floor Use
- Medium Density Residential
- Single Family Homes
- Structured Parking
- Clubhouse/ Rec. Building
- Surface Parking
- Landscaping / Screening
- Pocket Park / Open Space
- Landscaped Corridors
- Shared Use Path
- Pedestrian Street

Appendix B: Zoning Ordinance

Zoning Ordinance will be included here after final approval.