

# New 70 District

September 2, 2015

Town of Beaufort, NC



This is a copy of the Work-in-Progress presentation provided on September 2, 2015. It summarizes the input and ideas collected during the three-day Design Studio.

# Project Team



FERRELL  
MADDEN

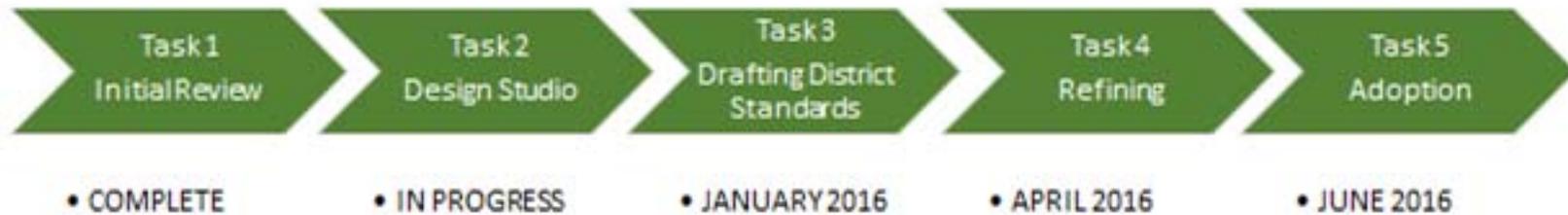
LandDesign

# Project Objectives

1. Ensure growth is consistent with community wants
2. Area developed cohesively
3. Raise the bar for development quality in the area
4. Consensus on preferred development
5. Serve as a model

These are the project objectives based on the Scope of Work and information collected during Task 1, Project Initiation.

# Project Schedule



# Work-in-Progress Presentation

*Beaufort, NC*  
*New 70 District*  
*Wednesday September 2, 2015*

This is the Work-In-Progress presentation, given at the end of the 3 day Public Participation Planning Workshop that began with the Public Design session on Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup>.

# Understanding the District

The first step in planning for the future of a new piece of Town is to *Look and Learn*. Understanding the history (roots) of the place as well as how it works today, along with its regional/natural situation and advantages, is critical to begin plans for its future. This is important for current citizens as well as professional planners.

# Studying the Context



Beaufort sits in a very particular spot. There are some constraints, but huge assets in its relation to nature as well as the quality of the man-made layout of the Town itself.

## Study the Site



The site of the New District is not directly on the water – but close by. It is a flat landscape of primarily farms, woods, and wetlands. It will be heavily shaped by the new 70 bypass roadway.

The image above is of the borrow-pit for road construction. There has been discussion of turning this into a positive natural feature – a lake.

# Understand the community



The value of the original plat and the qualities of “downtown” Beaufort should not be underestimated.



# Study the community



Beaufort has a great *Sense of Place*.

This is a definite part of its value: an attraction both as a place to live and as a place people want to visit and vacation.



This effort is a very different approach to the Planning Process! Instead of the old norm, where a developer presents his idea of what should be done to the Town (followed by the citizens trying to fight it or negotiate into something better for the town), we are starting out by working with the citizens, landowners and the Town *together* in a collaborative planning effort.

# Monday Night Kick-Off

## Public Participation Planning Workshop

A quick recap of what we have done so far this week...



Monday night began with presentations about the planning effort & process, information about the market, the site, and good place-making principles.

Then...

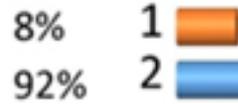
# Visual Preference

Which do you prefer?

Image 1



Image 2



A quick, teaser, Visual Preference exercise.

(a more extensive set of questions/images will be found on the Town's website next week.)

# Hands-On Design Exercise

And then we began the *Citizen Participation Design Workshop*.



Citizens, in small groups, worked on top of an aerial photograph of the New 70 District site and its surroundings.

Given the best and most current information about the site, they were asked to plan for its future as a new and contributing part of the Town of Beaufort.



After more than an hour of working together, a spokesperson from each table group presented their table's plan and aspirations for the site.

Everyone listened to everyone else – and discovered that the ideas from each table had much in common.



Tables 1 & 2

These are photographs of each of the 8 table groups work. The consultant team made notes of all these and compiled the suggestions. The task is to 'marry' all these ideas into a workable, achievable Master Plan that represents the aspirations of the Town and also reflects market realities.

Higher resolution images are available from the \_\_\_\_\_.



Tables 3 & 4

These are photographs of each of the 8 table groups work. The consultant team made notes of all these and compiled the suggestions. Their task is to 'marry' all these ideas into a workable, achievable Master Plan that represents the aspirations of the Town and also reflects market realities.

Higher resolution images are available also.



Groups 5 & 6

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Higher resolution images are available also.



Groups 7 & 8

These are photographs of each of the 8 table groups work. The consultant team made notes of all these and compiled the suggestions. Their task is to 'marry' all these ideas into a workable, achievable Master Plan that represents the aspirations of the Town and also reflects market realities.

Higher resolution images are available also.

# What You Told Us What We Heard

## New 70 District Vision Concepts

Now, based on the Group presentations and table drawings, these are the new concepts that we *heard* were at the heart of your aspirations for the New 70 District.

If we haven't gotten it right— you have to let us know, so we can adjust.

# Big Ideas

- Connectivity
- Variety of Green Space
- Missing Pieces—Complement, not Compete
- Housing choices
- Quality development - design standards

We took the drawings and suggestions you made and put them into this organization. We believe it includes all the consistent/frequent concepts for the future that you gave us. They are described/explained further in the slides that follow.

(Let us know if we heard you right or not!)

# Connectivity

- 101 and Truck Traffic
- Within the District
- To and from Beaufort Proper (all modes)

Each of the previous individual points includes/involves many aspects.

Let's start with Connectivity. We think there are 3 big parts to it.



The presence of big tractor-trailer trucks on 101 – and the likelihood of an increase in their numbers, as the port is anticipated/predicted to grow.

# Connectivity – 101 truck routing



Through this process we have come to recommend that the route for heavy truck traffic continue to be 101 – and not cut through the site to connect earlier to the new 70 by-pass. This will also take that truck traffic off the 70 by-pass, freeing it to do a better job for local and tourist traffic.

Truck traffic can be smoother for 2 reasons: the simpler route and a reduction in the number of curb cuts on 101 along the New 70 District. (More on the number of curb cuts on 101 later.)

## Connectivity – within



On Connectivity within the New 70 District: a main east-west connection between 101 and the 70 by-pass is crucial. This can provide a central focus for the site and it bisects property that is already interested in redeveloping.

# walkability



10. Narrow Streets
9. Street Trees
8. Traffic Volumes
7. Sidewalks
6. Interconnected Streets
5. On-Street Parking
4. Lower Traffic Speeds
3. Mixed Land Use
2. Buildings Fronting a Street
1. Small Block Size

A quick reminder of the key aspects of good place-making, that we discussed on Monday evening.

This is a Town Planners Top Ten list (much like Dave Letterman's on the old Late Night Show) for Walkability. The exact order is up for discussion, but all are important.

These points are important to keep in mind as we look at how we can get the most *value* out of this site; *value* for both the Town and the land owners.

Connectivity –  
within

A connected  
network

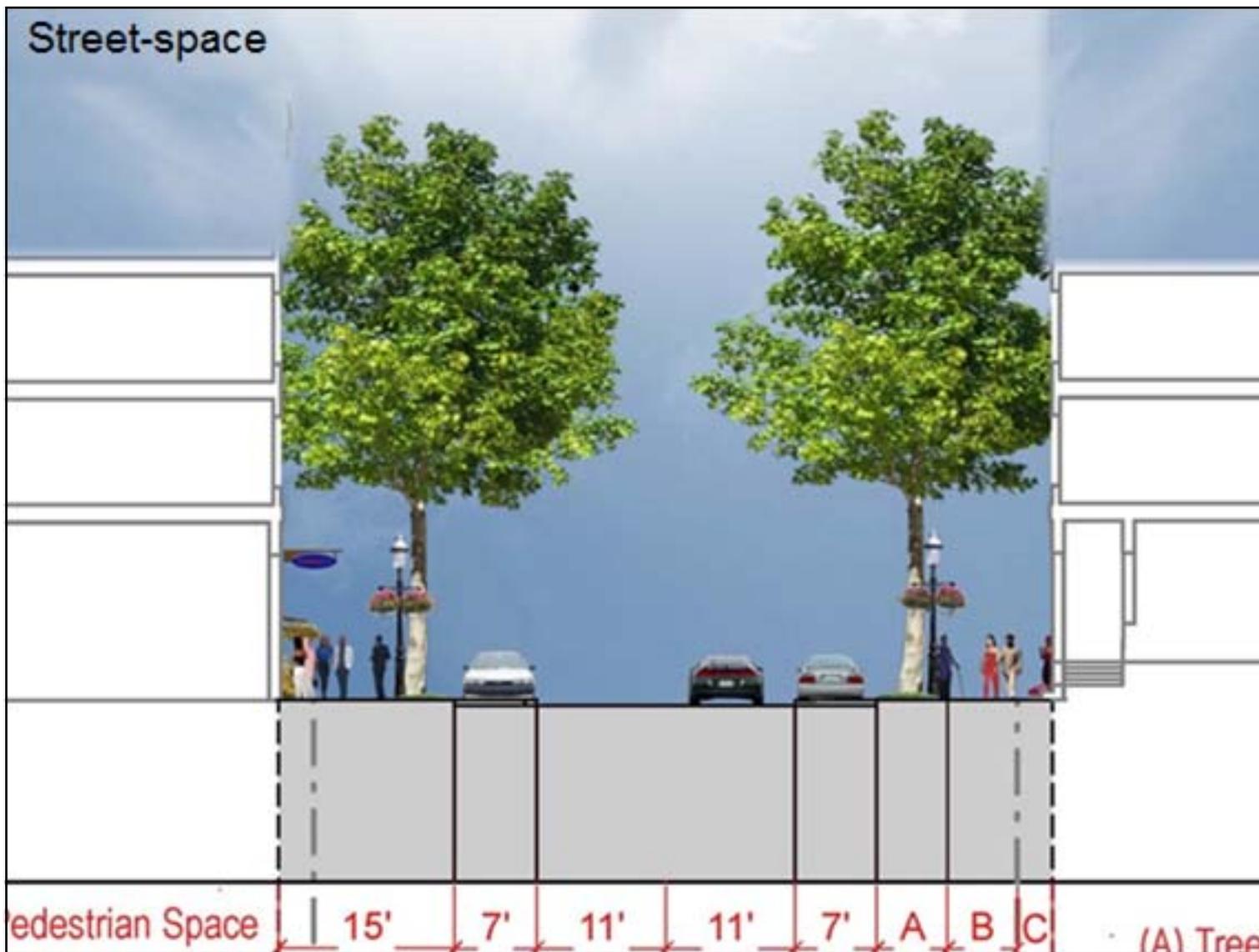


A Development Framework

The dashed red lines are property lines; the thin black lines represent street connections that should be made to coordinate development among the various properties on the site. Some properties will surely develop later than others. Some perhaps not for a very long time. This framework means that properties that do develop will mesh with adjacent development in a positive way. It ensures that the whole of New 70 District will be greater than the sum of its parts.

The street and block pattern shown is generally slightly larger than that of the original Plat of Beaufort – and perfectly developable for a

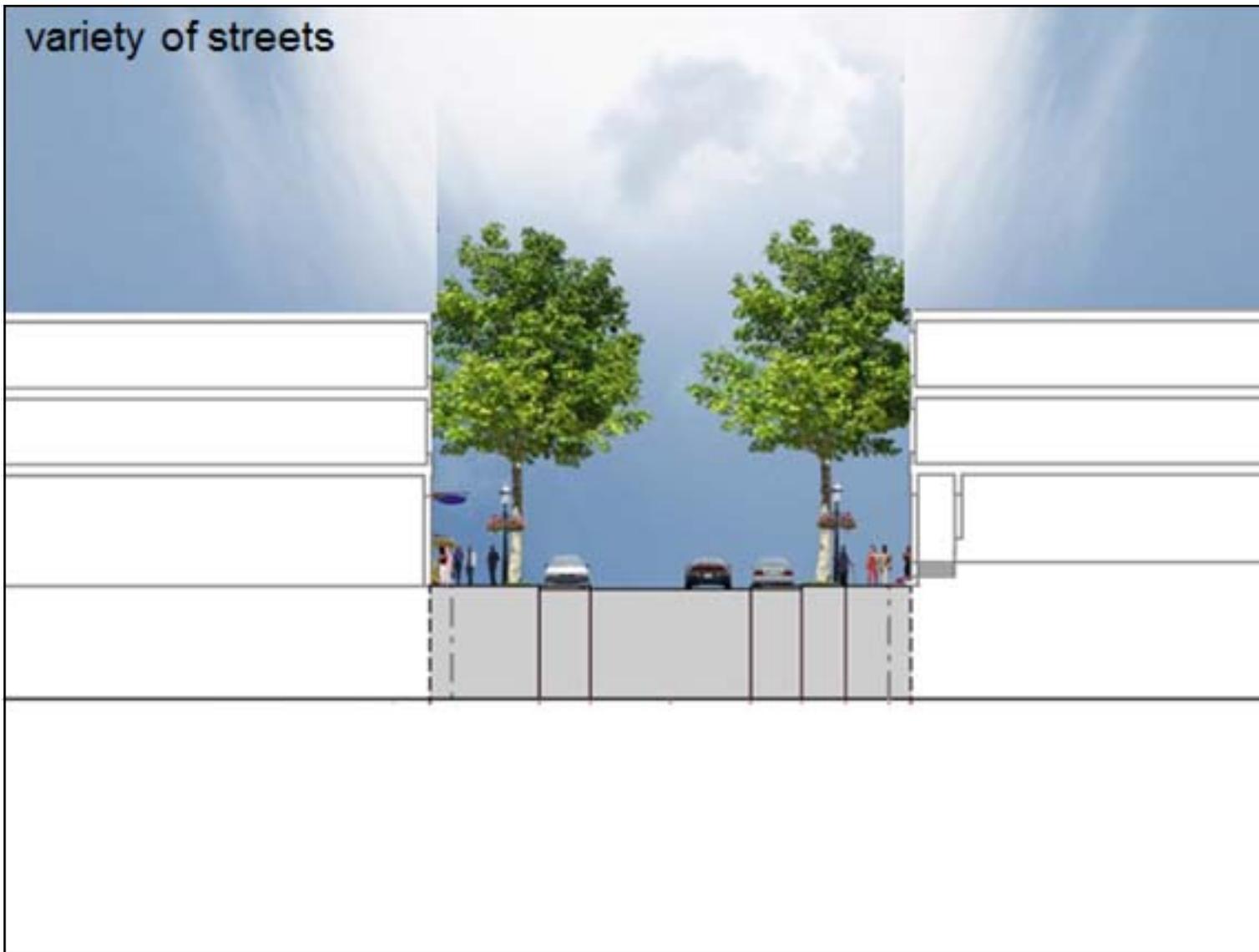
very wide variety of things.



When we talk about streets and the *Public Realm* – or *Street-Space*, we are talking about the public area between the building facades.

The streets that may be built in this inter-connected framework will NOT be all the same – there will be a variety of types.

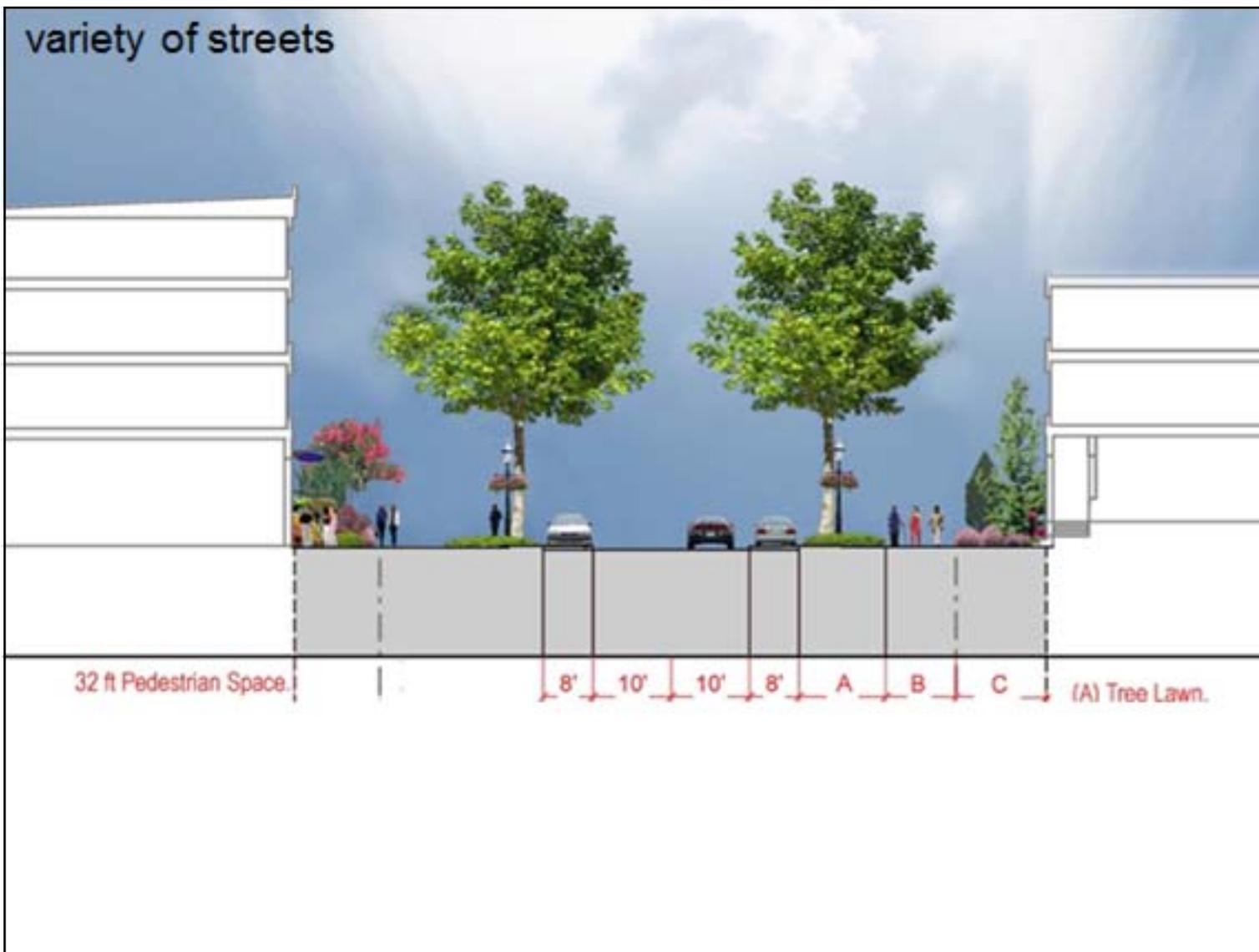




A typical "Main Street"

They will all be "local" scale streets (no highways) meant for all kinds of transportation, from cars to bikes and pedestrians.

These types of streets actually raise property values.

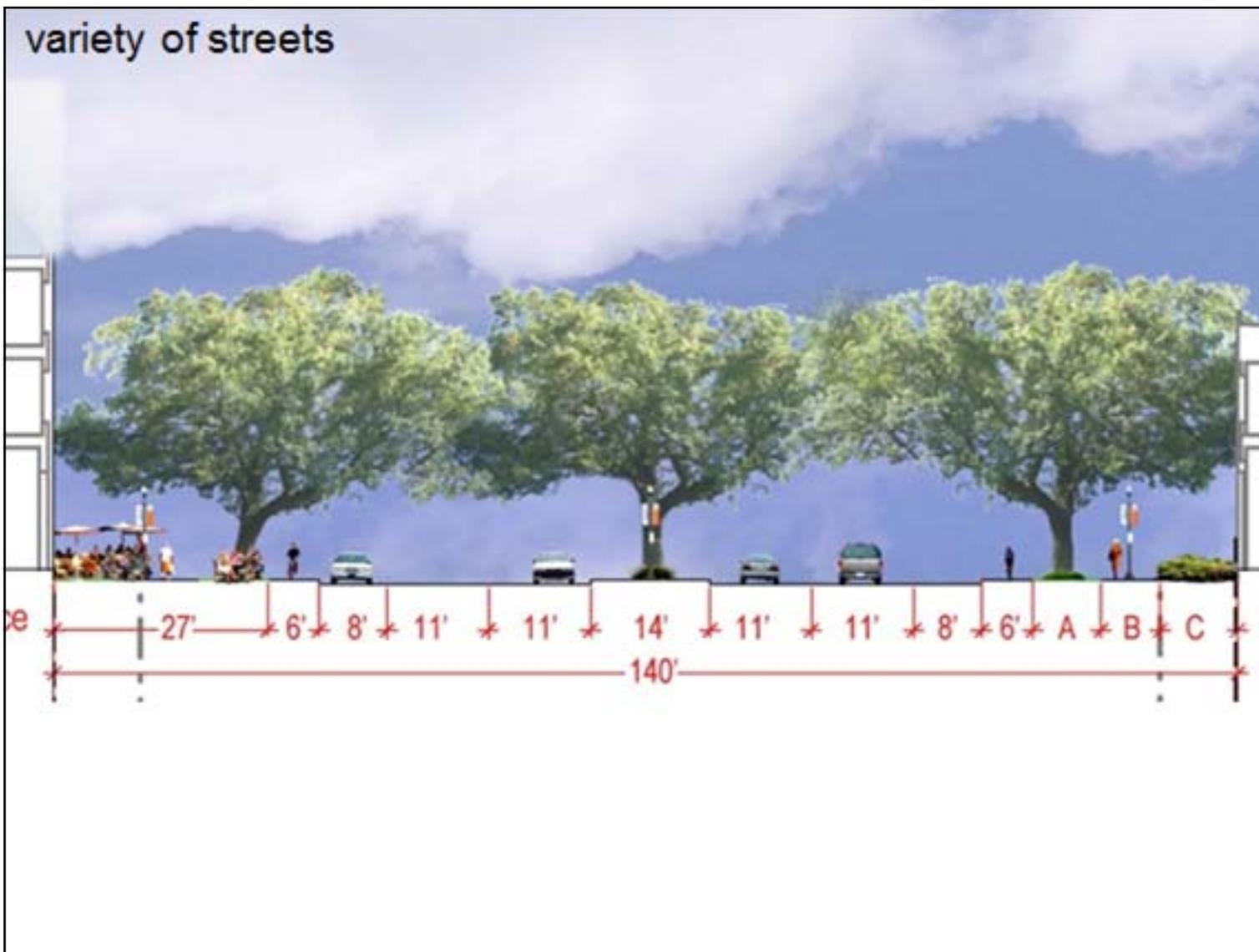


A "Garden or Local Street"

The streets that may be built in this inter-connected framework will NOT be all the same – there will be a variety of types.

All will be "local" scale streets (no highways) meant for all kinds of transportation, from cars to bikes and pedestrians.

These types of streets actually raise property values.



A "Boulevard or Avenue"

The streets that may be built in this inter-connected framework will NOT be all the same – there will be a variety of types.

All will be "local" scale streets (no highways) meant for all kinds of transportation, from cars to bikes and pedestrians.

These types of streets actually raise property values.

## Phases & Choices



This is an example of how properties could develop separately– but still be coordinated and synergistic. The property to the North (top right) now has a tree farm (the green rectangle). Notice how the street connection (the light green lines) is placed a distance away from the tree farm so it could continue behind new lots in front. The property owners could continue the tree farm after the next harvest or continue the street and block pattern and develop the land in other ways.

Because the connections at the outside property lines will be specified – the streets in the northern parcel will always connect with those to the north or south, when and if those properties are developed.

## Connectivity – to the rest of Beaufort



Connectivity with (the rest of) Beaufort was a major concern of every table-group.

- With truck traffic taken off the 70 by-pass, it will be unburdened and more amenable to a second, full movement, intersection with the new main street through the District. This will allow reasonable connectivity with the Town to the south and east. (Large circles identify full intersections on 70 by-pass.)
- Curb cuts and driveways along 101 will be reduced as redevelopment occurs and they are reorganized/consolidated into street intersections. Currently there are 14 properties fronting 101 north of Family Lane, each with the right to a curb cut driveway – this plan would reduce that to 5 street intersections (identified by small circles).

- We also propose 2 additional 'right-in, right-out' connections along the 70 by-pass to the north into and out of the District. (Identified by arrows.)

# Green Open Space

A variety



There are a variety of green open spaces in the plan, playing two basic roles.

The darker green areas are major parts of the storm-water filtration and drainage system and relatively fixed by the topography and environmental conditions.

The lighter green spaces include the airport property, sure to remain open space, and the green areas that would include 'pocket parks', 'tot-lots', and 'civic greens'. (these would also help filter storm-water)



This is an example of what the linear green shown on the plan next to the 70 by-pass might be (but ideally better!). It could be a series of ponds and channels that bio-filter the runoff at the same time they enhance the aesthetic of the area and serve as public trails and bicycle paths.



This is an example of what the set of greens shown on the plan as distributed through the area of streets and blocks

They could range from simple open greens with trees, such as the above.

These will provide places for workers to eat lunch, un-programmed recreation, and of course a better environment.



They could also be configured in a way similar to those in old Savannah (above).

They will provide places for workers to eat lunch, un-programmed recreation, and of course a better environment.



This an example from a relatively recent new development (in Texas) where a very small area of land, by becoming a small plaza (public open space), has made a great people place and added value to the adjacent properties.



**Athletic Fields** (soccer, baseball, softball)

The New 70 District also has room for the athletic fields you told us you wanted for Beaufort.



## Walking/Biking Trails

Walking and biking trails were almost universally asked for (as well as walking and bicycling access into the District from other areas of town) and they are a natural fit with the natural storm-water systems, parks, small greens and tree-lined streets of the New 70 District.



**Amphitheaters/Bandshells**

Many spoke for community gathering and event spaces, and these also complement the Town and the District.

Missing Pieces—  
Complement, not  
Compete

Provide opportunities (for  
residents & visitors) not  
located elsewhere in  
Beaufort

A citizens “Big Idea” is that this be a part of Beaufort – and a contributing, high value, part.

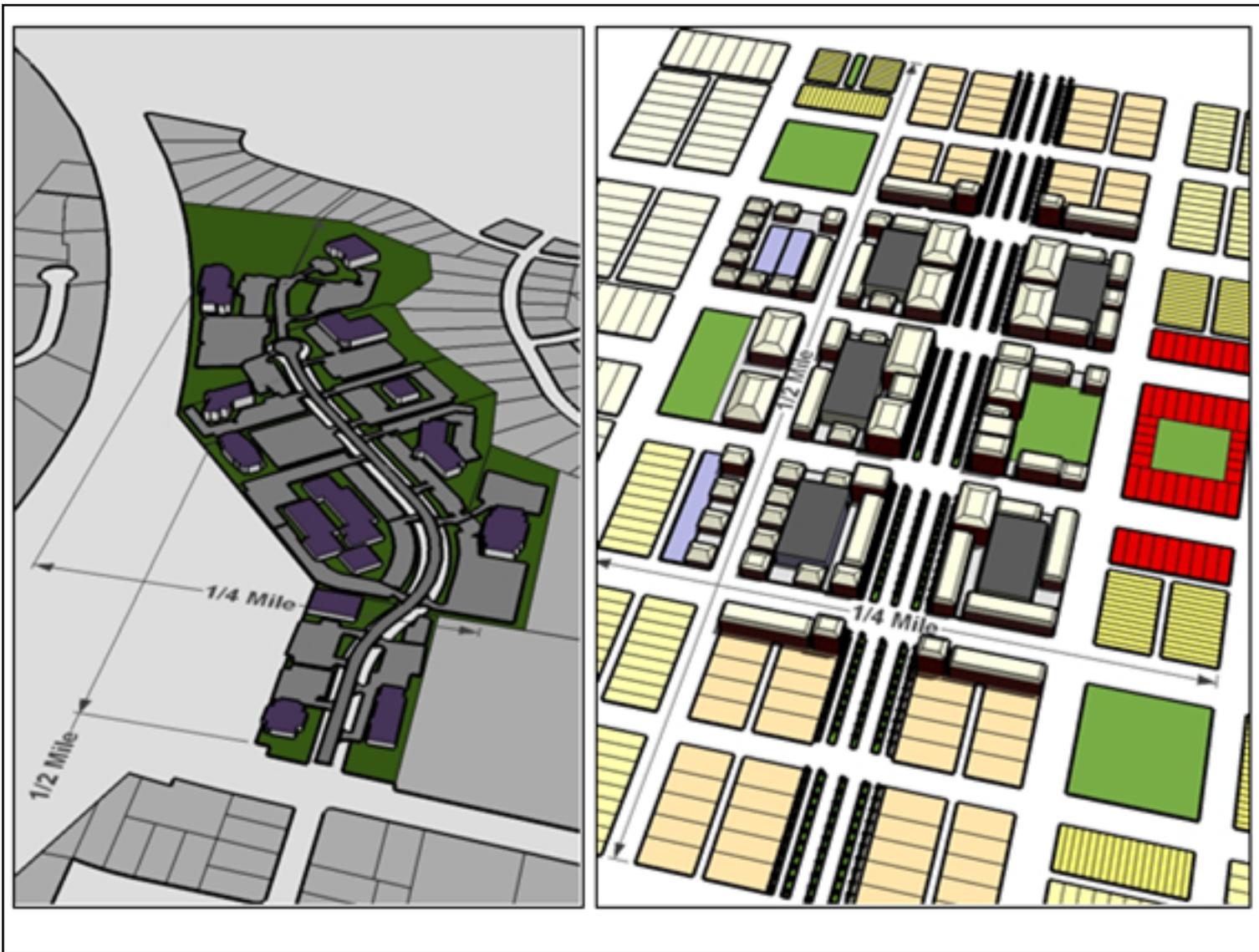
# Housing Choices

- Senior Housing
- Workforce Housing
- Hotel
- Above the store apts

A part of that is the idea of new kinds of residential opportunities – not currently in good supply.

# New Workplace & Perimeter Blocks

Now some discussion about the organizational ideas for the New 70 District.

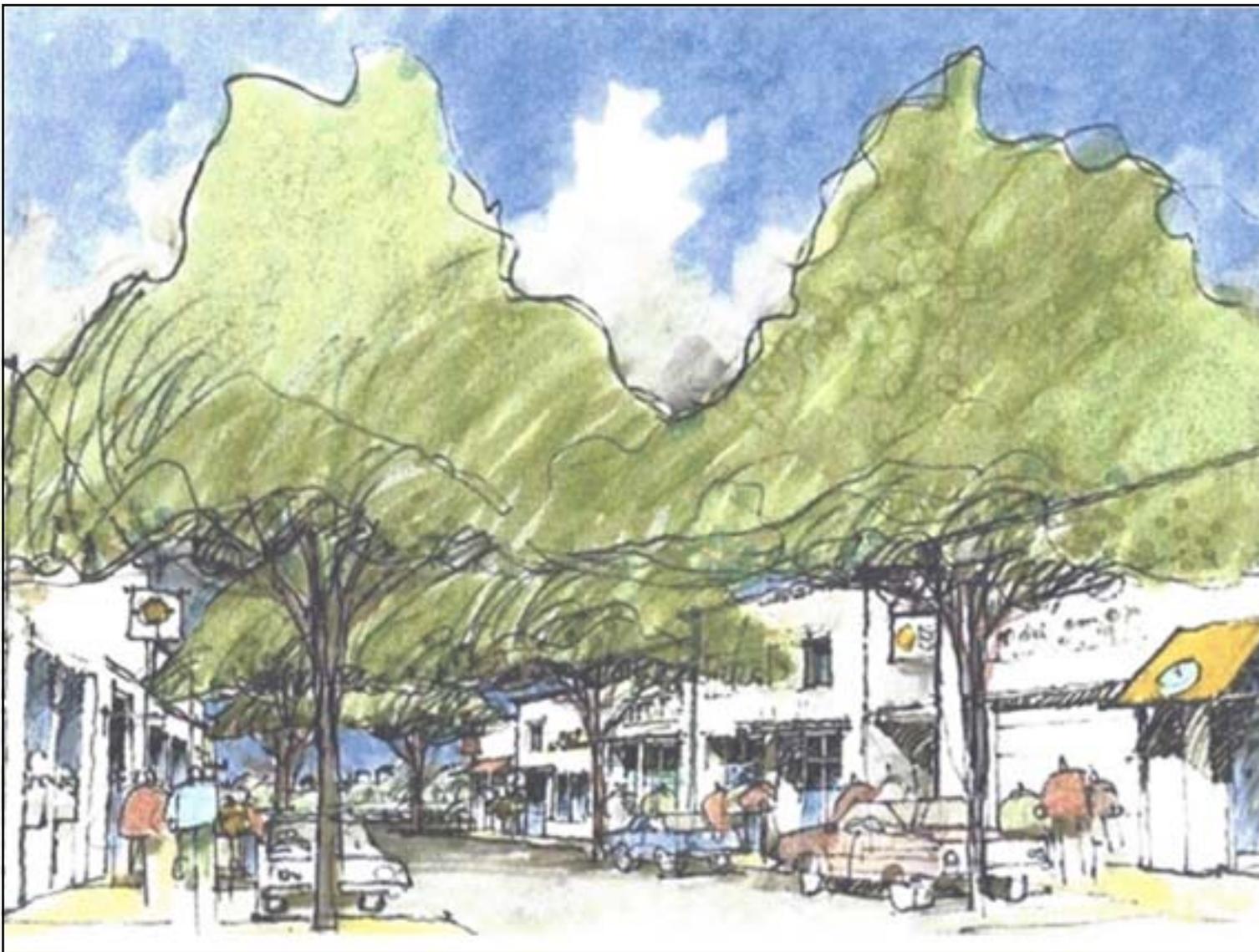


This illustration by the *Work Place Study* by the Grand Valley Metro Council shows how the old technique for workplace & light industrial areas on the left is less efficient than the rectilinear system proposed for the District. The New 70 District system uses less land and provides more public and useable open space (and greater connectivity for all modes of transportation).



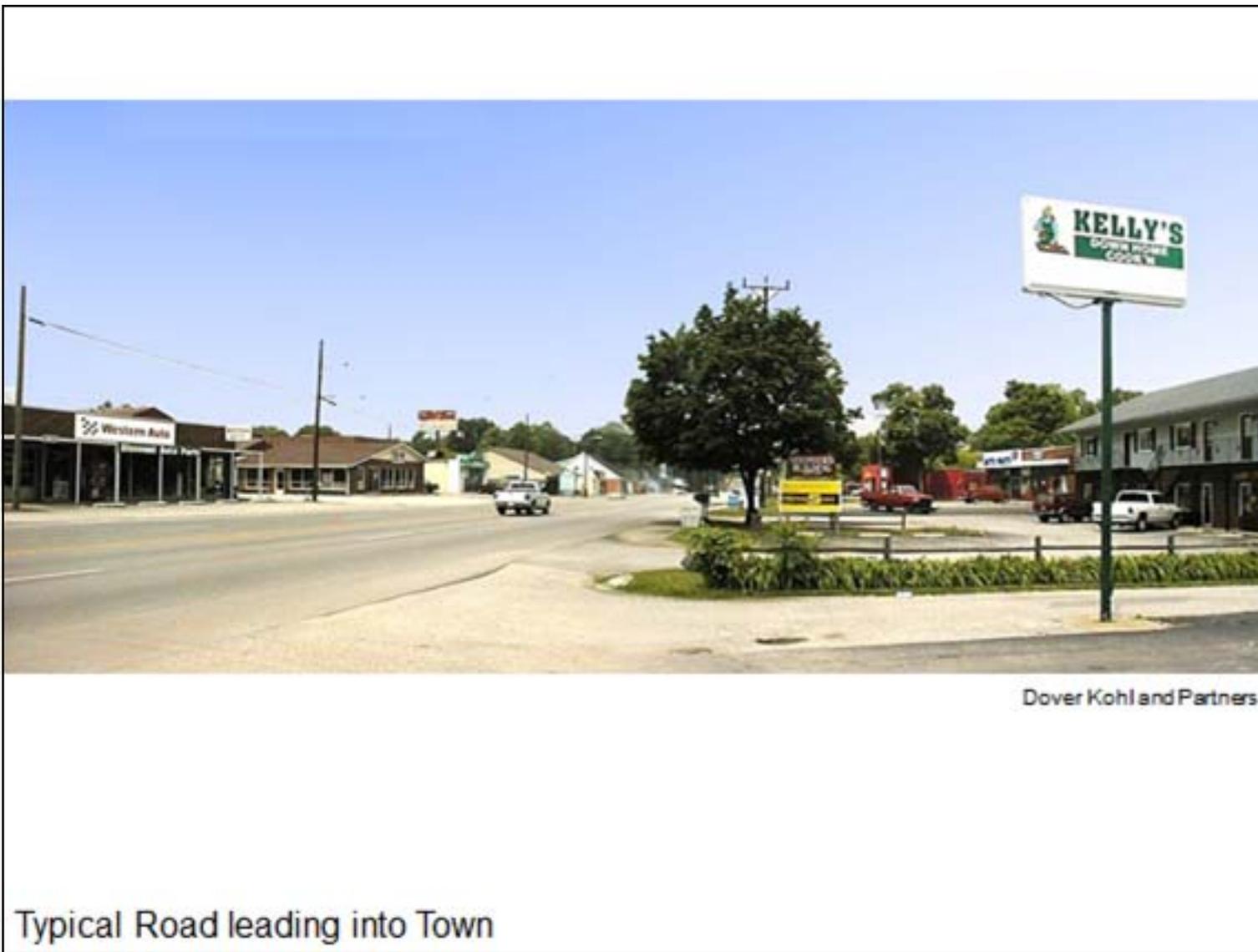
An illustration of what a street might look like in a Workplace area of the District. Street trees, sidewalks, and simple buildings pulled up to the street.

Pedestrian entries and office functions with windows will be on the street – the working functions will be mainly behind and to the rear of the buildings.



An illustration of what a street might look like in a more commercial area of the District. Street trees, sidewalks, and simple buildings pulled up to the street. Behind the front room these buildings maybe simple shells, providing flexible space – completely adaptable by their occupants.

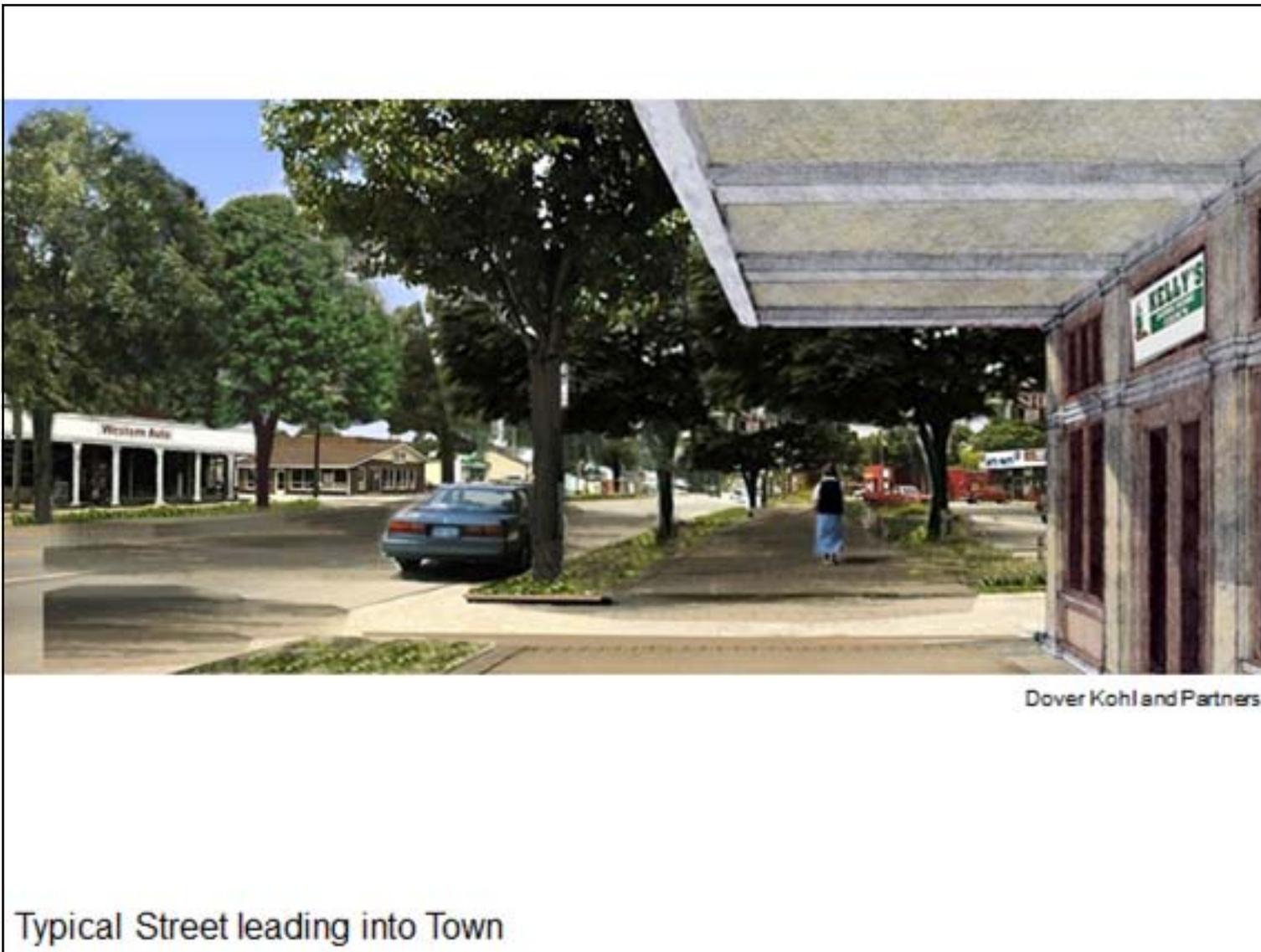
This street might be a business incubator. The buildings allow for almost any kind of small to medium scale production/research/repair or even retail uses.



Here are 2 images to illustrate the usefulness and value of the configuration we are recommending.

The above is a picture of the very typical form of commercial uses at the edge of most any American small town. The street/roadway is lined with parking lots, large signs, and buildings here and there.

This puts all the unattractive working-functional aspects of the business right out in front (within or visible from the public realm) and creates an automatic code-enforcement problem.



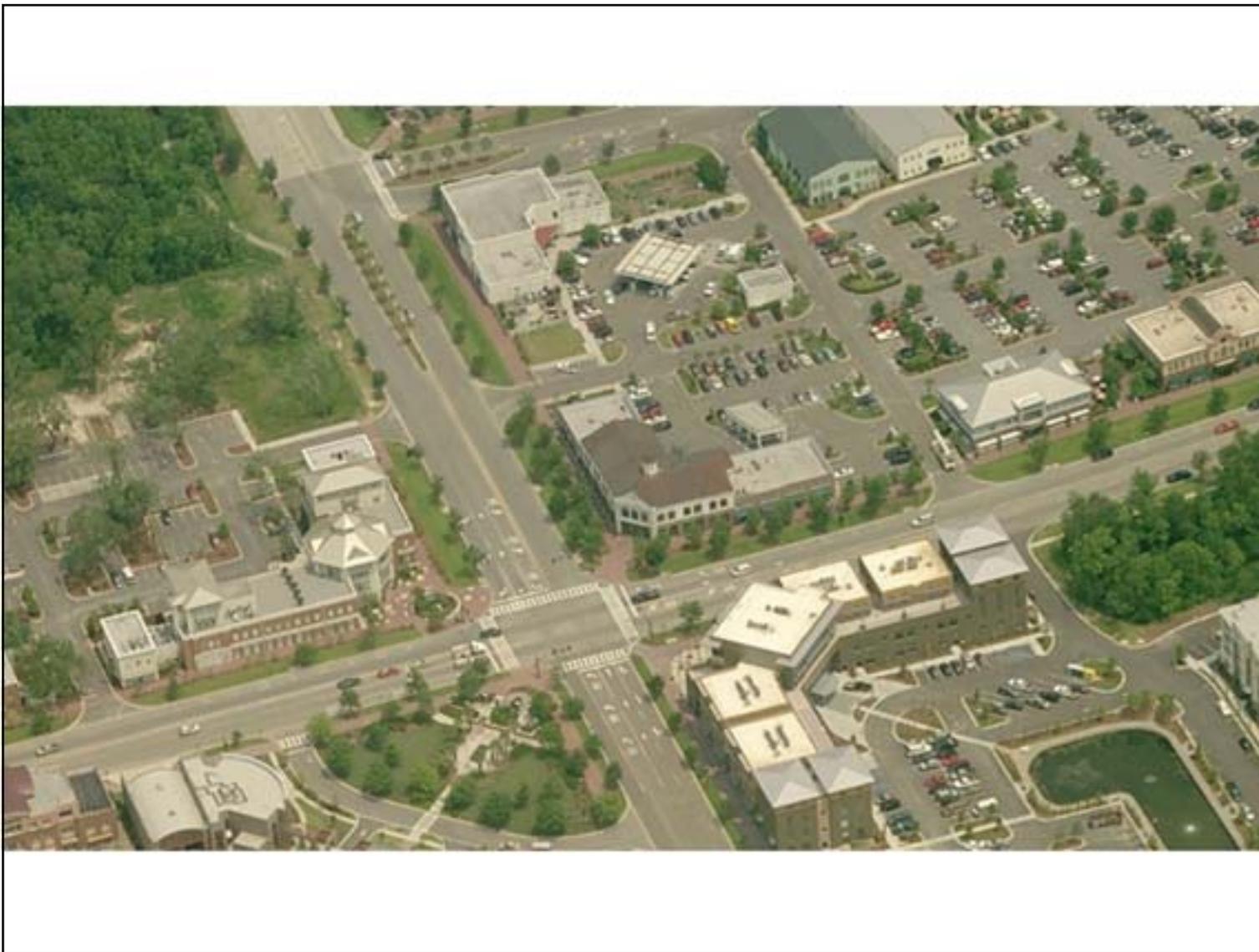
Here is the 'photo-transformation' illustrating the configuration we are proposing. Here, the buildings are up front and the work is done in back. Also note that the "road" has become a street that is tree-lined and has sidewalks.

This arrangement puts all the working-functional stuff in back, where it doesn't have to try and be pretty, it can just be functional.



An historical example of an Workplace/Workshop area. This area is still in use and dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. (It is in Michigan.)

Today it would be built a bit differently.



A very recent example. While this is a more heavily retail environment (near Charleston SC) and with much larger streets than will be appropriate in the New 70 District, it does show how the buildings are aligned up to the sidewalk to form the street and public open spaces – and the parking, gas pumps, and other work aspects are in the rear, within the block interior.

# Quality Development (good tax base)

Good development can be good for the Town's tax base, and that is good for all citizens.



And this is definitely not good for this city's tax base.

The real estate along this roadway is devalued by its character.



A good Street, or public realm, is made up of several parts working together to promote Walkability and increase value.

Starting right at the building:

- there is an area that really belongs to the building – the Dooryard
- then the area for people going somewhere on foot – the Walk Zone
- then the Furniture Zone/Street Tree area
- then the on-street parking



And here is a street of very different character – all those same pieces are distributed differently.

- the Dooryard is much wider
- the Walk Zone is about the same
- the Furniture/Street Tree area is wider and really all about trees
- the on-street parking is still there, standing in between moving cars and pedestrians



This is an example of a small scale mixed-use set of buildings. It shows how a 3-4 story building can have a smaller scale and how much the street trees affect and filter our view of the buildings.



A good retail or commercial street front doesn't have to be fancy or expensive. This is a simple storefront – one story.



Here is a small mixed-use street with 2-3 story buildings. The New 70 District may or may not have retail shops with residences above in its initial construction, but it could evolve into it. The rules will be written to allow such flexibility and healthy *change over time*.



Finally, don't underestimate the value of street trees in our Towns; they are not just about aesthetics. Many people have done real estate studies that show significant value-added for them. Above is one such estimate.

The initial cost is relatively low – we need to resist the temptation to *value-engineer* the trees out of our plans/new developments.

# Moving from a Vision to a Code

1. Development quality
2. Use still matters
3. Mechanics



The following slides discuss how we move from the vision identified in the Design Studio towards a new zoning district for the study area. The slides will focus on three key areas:

# Quality Development



What we've heard from the Beaufort community is that we want to establish a minimum baseline, or floor, for development quality. This baseline will raise the bar for development compared to what is currently being developed. The image depicted above is current development in the Town, and the new baseline for the district would hopefully surpass that shown here.

# Quality Development



What does raising the bar mean?  
Some things we heard from you this week are:  
No corporate architecture....like that seen in this image

# Quality Development



No monolithic building walls, like those shown in this image...

# Quality Development



Having parking lot location standards. We heard from you that you don't want to see a sea of parking in front of every new building (like the image on the left). Instead, you want to see well-landscaped, shady, appropriately sized parking lots that are to the back or side of buildings (as shown on the right).

# Quality Development



We heard that you want to see stormwater treated not as a utility, like in the photo on the left, but as an amenity, something that can add value, as seen on the right.

# Quality Development



Quality development also means that we have to address the public realm, as mentioned in the previous presentation. This means paying attention to the way that streets, sidewalks, and areas visible from the public space develop and including standards to ensure high quality public spaces in new development.

# Quality Development



So, we've talked about a high quality baseline. Now let's talk about incentives for surpassing that baseline, and providing even more desirable developments.

What kinds of items or things might the Town want to encourage a developer to provide that go above and beyond the baseline?

It could be upgraded open space, like a splash pad or plaza.



## Quality Development

It could be building more disaster resistant buildings, like the house in this photo that is still standing despite what looks like significant flooding. For Beaufort, it might mean a developer who builds walls to a 200 MPH wind standard instead of a lower standard.

# Quality Development



It might mean providing workforce housing, housing that people who work in this area can afford.

# Quality Development



It might mean building with higher quality building materials.



It might mean using some Low Impact Design (LID) techniques. In this picture, you see a parking lot that is built so that runoff runs into the landscaped areas for natural filtration. You can also see that the tree in the middle is an existing tree that has been built around.

# Quality Development

- Additional building height
- Increased lot coverage
- Lower development fees
- Others?



If a developer wants to go above and beyond by providing one of these things shown on the previous slides, what can they get in return? – remember this is a two-way, win/win relationship.

This slide shows some of the things the Town might allow for developers who chose to exceed the minimum baseline for development quality. There may also be others...

# Aspiration:

Complement, not compete



Now we're going to switch gears to talk about the uses that might be appropriate in the new district. As mentioned in the previous presentation, the goal you have for this district is to complement existing Beaufort, not compete with it or cannibalize business from downtown or existing 70.

We think that means this district needs to fill in some "missing pieces" to provide opportunities that aren't currently available. This means providing new uses for residents as well as visitors.

# Use Still Matters



For visitors, a new use that we heard is needed is some value-based lodging—hotels or motels that are more affordable to families.

# Use Still Matters



Eco-tourism opportunities to help both visitors and residents take advantage of Beaufort's natural resources.

## Use Still Matters



We also heard about a need for resident-oriented retail, such as a new grocery store.

# Use Still Matters



The second point on uses is: Lots of times when people talk about form-based codes, they talk as if use doesn't matter – if you build a building to look a certain way, you can put any use you like in it. This isn't true – we know, and you have told us, that use still matters. The uses in a form based district are flexible, but limited – it won't be a free for all.

There may be some uses that you want to limit in the new district.

For example: perhaps we limit single-family detached residential, since there is a lot of supply coming in the near future elsewhere in the Town.

Use  
Still  
Matters



Or maybe there are other uses you would like to limit in the area?

# Use Still Matters



Point 3 on uses is that we heard from you that you DO want to see an emphasis on workplace and commercial uses, like:  
Flex space, as is shown here.... (though new development might be configured to appear differently)

# Use Still Matters



Light industrial or technology uses, like shown here...

Use  
Still  
Matters



Marine-related businesses.

Use  
Still  
Matters



Retail.

# Use Still Matters



...and mixed-use “people places.”

# Use Still Matters



Point 4 is that you want this area to have uses for visitors AND residents.

Some of these might be: amphitheaters and civic centers.

# Use Still Matters



Ball fields and community gyms.

# Use Still Matters



Community gardens.

# Use Still Matters



Medical uses.

## Use Still Matters



Maybe even a dog park!

# Mechanics



Now let's talk a little about the mechanics of this: How is this going to work?

First and foremost, this area will be the result of a partnership between the Town and landowners in the area. The first part of this is that the Town is sponsoring rezoning that will add a lot of value to the parcels in this area. In return, the Town is looking to enter into development agreements with the owners and developers of that land to ensure that all landowners are treated equitably – e.g., everyone contributes something to the public use or regional stormwater use.

# Mechanics



The second thing to note here is that participation in the rezoning and development agreement is totally optional for landowners. If you don't want to join, that is okay – no one is making anyone join an agreement or get rezoned. BUT if you don't participate, you won't receive the same benefits as others who are participating in the partnership.

Also, joining the agreement won't raise your taxes until you are ready to stop farming the land. Under Current Use taxation, even rezoned land that is still an active farm – like the cornfields and tree farms on the district area – will be taxed as agricultural land until you are ready to develop.



# Mechanics



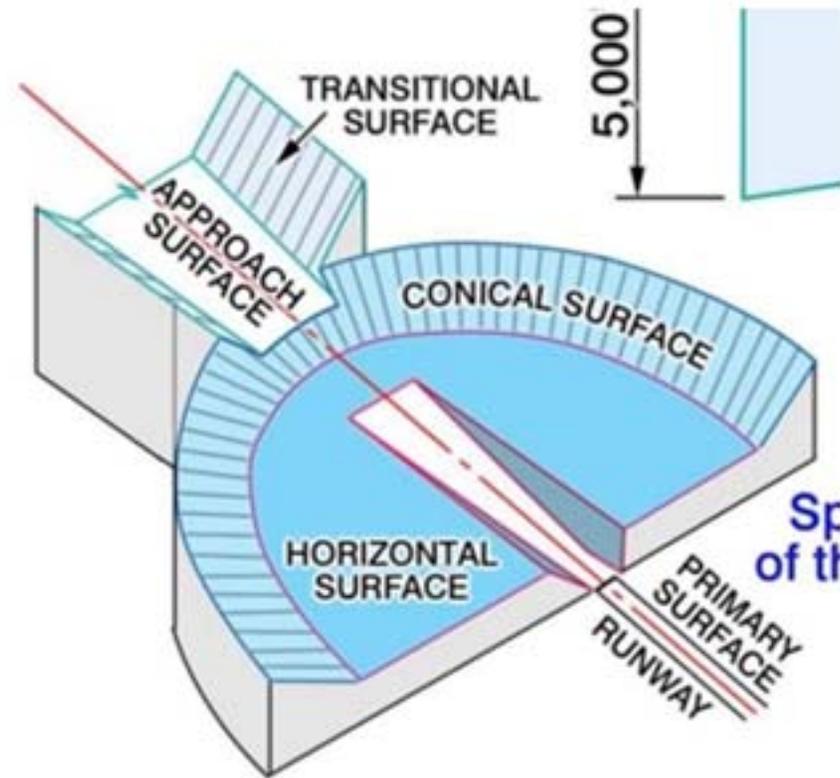
Another key part of the mechanics of this district are, as the previous presentation described in detail, a connected transportation network. The development code for the district will contain both a map and textual guidelines for the placement, sizing, and character of streets and multimodal transportation infrastructure within the district.

# Ongoing Explorations



As we told you on the first night of this process, we knew our team would leave Beaufort with a list of questions still to be answered and topics still to be studied in greater detail. Some of the key “ongoing explorations” are:  
Increasing access along New 70.

# Ongoing Explorations



The exact implications of the RPZ on the site. This may involve working with the FAA to negotiate for additional uses that could be placed in the RPZ. It will definitely include a set of updated standards for how to decide what kind and how intense development can be within this zone.

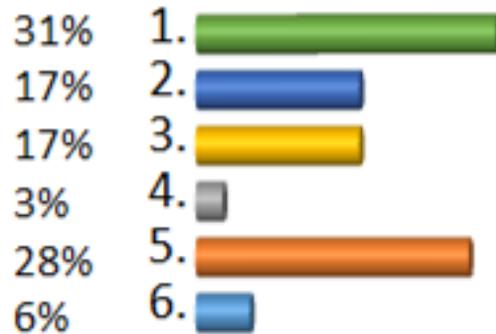
# On-Line Preference Surveys



And finally, as we've mentioned, we will be putting an extended and improved version of the Citizen Preference Survey online on the Town's website next week. This will help us refine our understanding of Beaufort's preferences for what the district standards will be.

## Pick your number one priority for this area:

1. Connectivity
2. Variety of Green Spaces
3. Missing Pieces – Complement, not Compete
4. Housing Choices
5. Quality Development/Design Standards
6. I don't see my priority here.



For now, we'd like to get a bit of feedback on the priority issues we identified from your input during the workshop on Monday. Up here we have listed the "big ideas" once again.

Use your keypads to vote for the one that is YOUR personal number one priority for the new 70 district.

If your top priority isn't listed, click number 6, and be sure to write down what IS your top priority on a notecard before you leave.

*(Results: 36 people voted via keypad. The top priority was connectivity, closely followed by quality development/design standards. Only one voter chose Housing Choices as their top priority, and 2 people said their top priority was not on the list.)*

Are we headed in the right direction?



Finally, we'd like to hear from you – again using the notecards or in the online preference survey comments – whether we are headed in the right direction with the district generally.

From everything you've seen – the big ideas, design principles, concept plans, etc – if you think we are not headed in the right direction or if we are almost there but not quite, tell us what we are doing wrong or what changes we need to make.

Thank you!