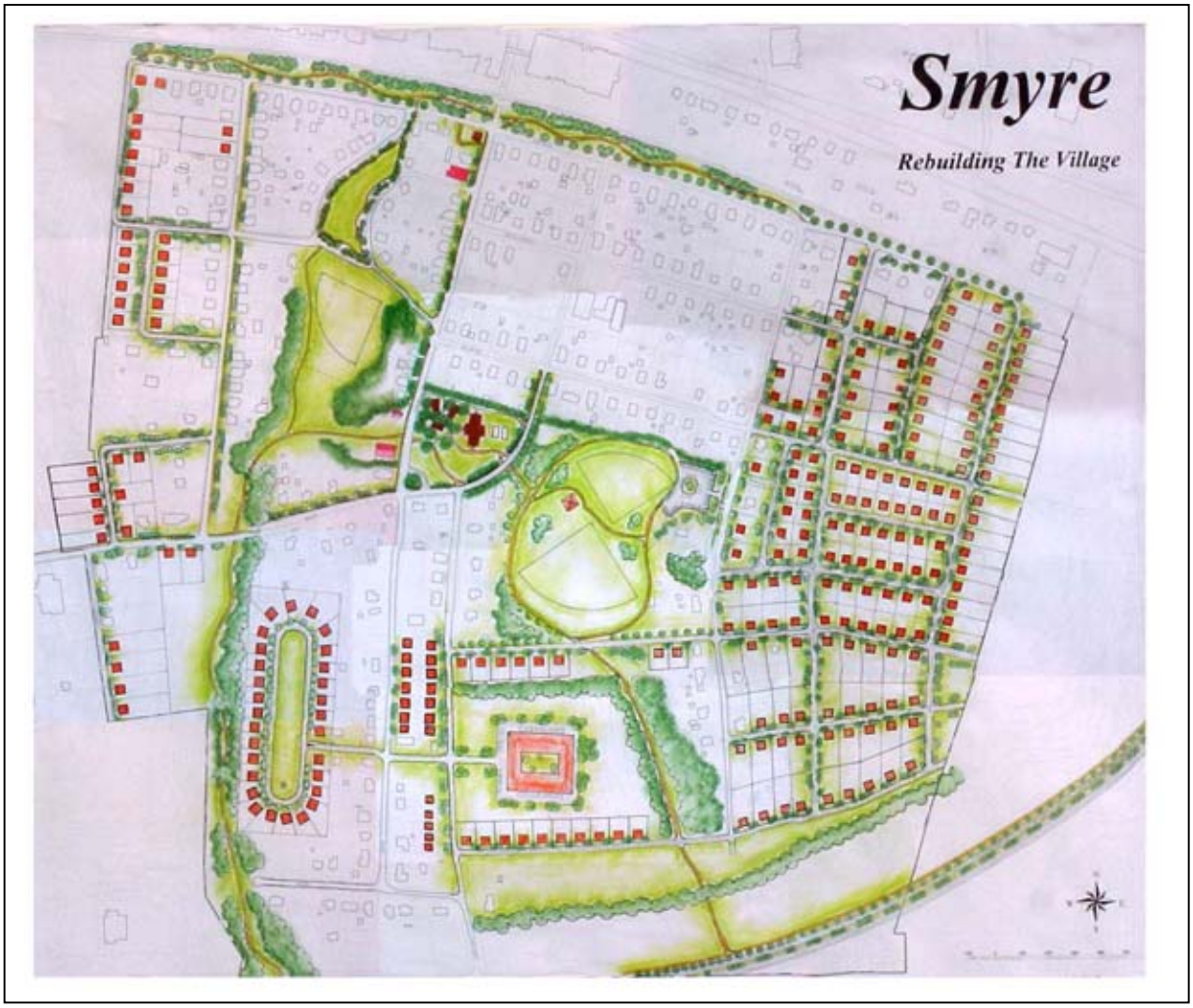
Smyre Village Plan

Smyre……Rebuilding the Village



Adopted May 16, 2000

Smyre Village Plan
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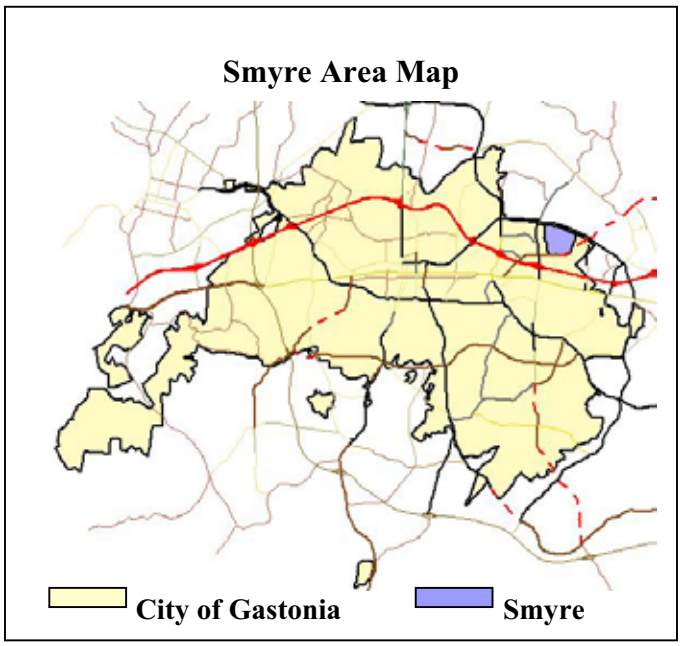
Smyre Village Plan

Introduction

The Smyre Mill Village became part of the City of Gastonia in June 1996, through a friendly annexation. On occasion, neighborhoods ask the City to conduct informational meetings to introduce citizens to City departments and services. One such meeting was held on June 10, 1999 in the Smyre community. During this meeting, residents expressed concern about how their land was zoned and what this meant to the future of their neighborhood. At the same time, the City's Code Enforcement Division was becoming involved in the community through concerns of the Smyre Community Watch. This neighborhood group contacted Code Enforcement to help them address some of the problems in the community.



Smyre residents felt that their community was being threatened by surrounding development and wanted to find a way to preserve the character of their community. The development of the Mount Holly Connector, the prevalence of R-4 (multi-family) zoning, the continuing expansion of the Gaston Memorial Hospital ancillary uses, and the hundreds of acres of vacant land adjacent to the village could drastically impact this traditional village forever. The Smyre Community Watch and other interested citizens requested assistance from the City to help them plan for the future growth and development of their neighborhood. After hearing the concerns of the Smyre citizens, the Community Improvement Division of the City of Gastonia and the Planning Department concluded that a long range visioning session would be helpful in determining what the citizens wanted for their community. A three day "design charette" -- a short-term intensive community design workshop – was planned for August 19, 20, 21, 1999. This neighborhood plan is based on the findings and the citizen input obtained during the charette process.

Mill Village History

The area known generally as the Smyre Mill Village is roughly 200 acres. The area is bounded by the Norfolk-Southern Railroad to the north and Aberdeen Boulevard to the south. The western boundary is one block west of Wellman Street and the eastern boundary is adjacent to the Lineberger property.

Smyre is a well known textile family name in the City of Gastonia. In 1917, the A. M. Smyre Manufacturing Company built a two-story brick mill on the Gastonia-Lowell highway for the production of combed cotton yarns. At the same time, a village was constructed to house the 150 mill employees and their families. The homes were constructed with materials from a World War I military camp in Charlotte. The Camp Green military homes were disassembled and brought to the Smyre community to be reassembled. The majority of the housing is typical of North Carolina mill workers' cottages, most of

which remain to this day with only minor modifications and upgrading of amenities. Since the first mill building was built in 1917, three more mill buildings and an office building have been built. In 1981 Carolina Mills, Incorporated purchased the A. M. Smyre Manufacturing Company and has absorbed the mill into its organization. Although the Smyre family does not own the mill, the surrounding neighborhood keeps the family name.

The mill village was constructed in a method that was common at the time in Gaston County. The mill owned the village houses and rented the homes to mill employees. The homes were within walking distance of the mill, were connected by narrow streets and alleys, sat close to the street, had large front porches, and were constructed in a dense development pattern. These traditional development features are characteristic of the modern-day neo-traditional development movement and serve as the building blocks for a livable community. Traditional development is becoming more popular as citizens grow tired of modern, often dysfunctional, non-pedestrian friendly development patterns.

Existing Conditions

The village lies within Census Tract 313, Block 2, which had 3,651 persons in 1990. This block encompasses the entire village and also includes the Lineberger property, which is vacant, and a portion of Lowell. Block groups are the smallest geographic areas surveyed by the US Census Bureau.

The condition of the housing stock varies widely, ranging from well-preserved and maintained single family homes to marginal residential dwellings. Many manufactured homes in the neighborhood do not meet City and State codes and these problems are being addressed by the Zoning Enforcement Office. As the original mill-working population ages and its members die, many homes are bought by absentee landlords to rent to individuals who are more transient and have less ties to the area.

The once-thriving business and civic features along Smyre Drive have long since decayed, with only marginal operations surviving amidst abandoned buildings. A grocery store and barbershop once operated near the railroad underpass and a community center thrived at the center of the village. Despite abandonment, several of the old commercial and civic buildings located along Smyre Drive retain considerable character and potential. Buildings that can be used for non-residential community uses include the old Smyre Methodist Church on the northwest corner of the intersection of Smyre Drive and Court Drive, the old BBQ building on the northeast corner of the intersection, and a commercial building at the corner of Millstone and Smyre Drive.

The community was once filled with recreational amenities for adults and children. Facilities included tennis courts, a ball field, basketball courts, a fishing pond, and a park with swings, slides, and a merry-go-round. Dances were held at the community center, movies were shown in the park, and the water tower was decorated for Christmas. The community involvement and the neighborhood amenities have disappeared over time, however the renewed interest in the village is quite promising. The community does possess several churches with hardy congregations including Fraley Baptist Church and Mt. Hebron United Methodist Church. Much of their congregations are made up of people who used to live in the neighborhood and moved away, but who return for worship and to retain their connections to their original home. Also, the Smyre community is fortunate to have a strong community watch comprised of citizens who are dedicated to neighborhood improvement.

Current Zoning and Land Use

The Smyre study area consists of roughly 200 acres of land, most of which is used for single family

residential use. Site built homes predominate the core village area. Cline Mobile Home Park on the northeast side of the neighborhood contains over 40 single-wide mobile homes. Other mobile homes and several duplexes are scattered throughout the neighborhood. Although several, formal commercial buildings are still in existence, no commercial or industrial uses can be found ***within*** the neighborhood. Roughly 39 acres of land in the southeastern portion of the study area is vacant and smaller areas of vacant land extend throughout the neighborhood.

The majority of the study area is zoned R-4, which allows single family and multi-family development, among other uses typically found with residential development. Two areas are zoned C-1 for commercial use. One commercially zoned area is on the west side of Smyre Drive between Millstone Drive (above the circle) and Fair Oaks Drive; the other is on the east side of Smyre Drive between Court Drive and Millstone Drive. The land immediately adjacent to the village on the south and east, is zoned I-G for general industrial use. This land (which includes the Lineberger property) is expected to be developed along with the Mt. Holly connector. The land on the west side of the community contains a mix of O-2 office zoning and R-4 residential zoning.

Design Charette

A community design charette process was used to determine the type of future that Smyre residents visualize for their community. In this instance, the design process with the community was organized around three events; a "Kick-off" meeting with the community on Thursday August 19th at 7.00pm, followed by an all-day charette on Friday August 20th, and a presentation of the draft plan for comment on Saturday August 21st at 9:00am. All meetings were held in the large hall at the Fraley Memorial Baptist Church on Fraley Church Road. The main objectives of the charette were to:

Smyre Design Charette
opening session for citizen input

a. find out what the citizens of Smyre want for their community;
b. establish a clear and practical vision to improve the physical character of the Village;
c. develop ways to revitalize the residential and civic environment in the neighborhood;
d. stabilize, enrich, and improve the quality of life within the community;
e. involve as many members of the community as possible in starting the process of neighborhood revitalization;
f. support the neighborhood revitalization by creating a positive and upbeat message about the future of the neighborhood.

The initial meeting attracted over 70 Smyre residents and included a welcome by Mayor McAteer and remarks by Rick Smyre, futurist and former Smyre mill executive officer. City planning staff gave an

A Design Charrette is a term derived from intensive design work at the great French architecture academy L'Ecole des Beaux Arts (School of Fine Arts) in Paris during the nineteenth century. At this time, students worked in professors' offices scattered throughout the city, and when design projects were due, the School sent out a cart (charette) to collect the drawings. The clatter of the cart's iron-rimmed wheels on the Paris cobblestones could be heard in advance of its arrival, and was the signal for frantic last minute bursts of activity on the part of the students. The word for the cart that collected the drawings eventually came to stand for the intense design process itself.

overview of the charette process and presented a slide show illustrating applicable urban design issues. The most important part of the meeting came when citizens were asked to identify their concern for the future growth and development of their neighborhood. Staff assisted participants in brainstorming the issues that might affect the Smyre Mill Village. Specifically, residents were asked to identify "things that needed improvement" in their community and "things that they held dear" in their community. The results of this process are listed in the appendix of this plan.

Smyre Design Charette developing the design plan

During the all-day meeting on Friday, citizens worked in small groups to develop a plan for the Smyre Mill Village. Large maps and plenty of markers were on hand to allow citizens to illustrate preferred locations of recreational space, new housing, and traffic improvements. Citizens marked their ideas on maps while they discussed the history of the community and a desired future. Factors such as hospital growth, ample vacant land, and the Mt. Holly connector were considered in the discussions. By the end of the day, citizens had come to a general agreement on the basic components that were needed to improve the neighborhood. Following the Friday workshop, City Planning staff used these basic principles and rough sketches to prepare a draft "urban design" for the Smyre community. This possible future was illustrated through a large chalk drawing/map.

The last meeting was held on Saturday morning and was an affirmation of the consensus developed on Thursday and Friday. Roughly 25 residents and community leaders were present to see the results of Thursday and Friday's work. Planning staff presented the charette "design plan" of the Smyre Mill Village that was created through citizen input and provided illustrations of potential streetscapes.

Smyre Design Charette citizens review the design plan

Major Issues

The major issues and concerns that evolved from the Smyre charette process can be grouped into the following categories: Land Use, Streets, Community Amenities, and Community Character

Land Use - Future Development Potential

The development of a plan for the Smyre Mill Village comes at a time when this neighborhood can visually see the fabric and village style of living influenced either positively or negatively by several factors including:

- the Gaston Memorial Hospital development influence,
- the existing multi-family development zoning,
- the hundreds of acres of vacant land to the south and east of the Village (which have the potential to be developed for commercial, office, and high-density residential use), and
- the proposed Mount Holly Thoroughfare Connector, which will enhance opportunities for development.

The Smyre Village is in an optimal part of the City in terms of proximity to retail, services, entertainment, and highways. Franklin Square and Gaston Mall are within two miles of the Court Drive entrance to the Smyre community. These two facilities combined with surrounding development, provide extensive shopping and entertainment opportunities by offering grocery stores, home appliance stores, restaurants, clothing stores, movie theaters, and game rooms. Gaston Memorial Hospital is less than 1/2 mile from the Smyre community and Interstate 85 and Franklin Boulevard are within a 2 minute drive. These locational advantages make redevelopment a strong possibility within the community and vacant land on the south and east sides of the neighborhood are prime.

The hospital is a major influence on land use on the western side of the Smyre community. Contributing uses such as drug stores, doctor's offices, hotels, convenience stores, and high-end multifamily developments have cropped up along Cox Road and have extended towards the Smyre neighborhood along Court Drive. Much of the land along the neighborhood's western border is zoned for office use to accommodate this hospital related growth.

One of the major concerns of the Smyre community is the rapid growth of hospital related uses into the Smyre neighborhood. Residents are fully aware that office development and high density residential development serve as a good buffers between higher intensity uses (such as commercial and industrial uses) and the neighborhood. Office and high-end multifamily developments around the hospital are new, high quality, and aesthetically pleasing. Office uses are not as traffic intensive as commercial uses, are not usually open in the evenings, and maintain their properties to be pleasing to clients/patients. High density residential uses along Cox Road are marketed to hospital workers, which will promote pedestrian activity, and should not cause increased traffic within the Smyre community. Nonetheless, residents of Smyre want a clear line of distinction between the residential neighborhood and hospital relates uses. Through consensus, citizens have suggested that no office development extend east of Wellman Street or in the area north of Chesser Avenue.

Another factor that plays into the developability of surrounding land is the future Mt. Holly connector. The thoroughfare plan shows this street as a four lane divided highway that would connect Gastonia with Mount Holly. The proposed street would begin at Aberdeen Drive, travel northeast through the vacant Lineberger property, cross Highway 7 (Ozark Avenue), travel through the county to just north of the current Mouth Holly city limits. The practical capacity of this road will be 32,000 vehicles per day. The connector is currently on the unmet needs list in the Transportation Improvement Plan. This project is not programmed, therefore no timeline is scheduled and no funds have been appropriated for the project. This connector, if built before the surrounding property is developed, has the potential to bring commercial, office, and high density residential development to the Smyre area in the distant future. However, constructing the thoroughfare simultaneously with development will speed the process for the provision of the transportation amenity and surrounding growth.

If extensive commercial development occurs along the Mount Holly connector, a buffer will be needed for the Smyre community. Just as office and high density residential development has (and will) serve as a buffer on the western side of the neighborhood, office and multifamily development would be an adequate buffer along the connector. Although some connectivity between the Mount Holly connector and Smyre streets will be necessary and beneficial to the community, residents do not want their neighborhood to serve as a convenient detour for through-city traffic.

The residents of Smyre welcome new development that is compatible with the existing features within the village and that adds to the community's character. The original mill village contained many traditional neighborhood development characteristics. These characteristics distinguish older

neighborhoods from the typical subdivision built today and make the Smyre Mill Village unique. The original mill homes were built with minimal front setbacks, creating a strong sense of place, and many had substantial front porches conducive to a friendly neighborhood. Prominent sites in the neighborhood were reserved for civic buildings that were within a 5 minute walk for village residents. Streets were (and are) relatively narrow, slowing traffic and creating a safe environment for the pedestrian and the bicycle, and recreational amenities were within a short walk. These neighborhood features are highly sought after in today's market and can be used as a selling point for new development and community investment. Any new development that takes place within the Smyre village should take advantage of these traditional neighborhood features.

Historically, the Smyre Mill Village was predominately a single-family residential neighborhood and current residents agree that this manner of growth should be continued in the future. Although there are several single-wide manufactured homes on single lots within the Smyre community, no additional single-wide homes will be allowed. Single-wide homes are prohibited on individual lots within the City of Gastonia, however double-wide manufactured homes and modular homes are allowed. Civic oriented development and neighborhood commercial development is welcomed in particular portions of the neighborhood as long as it conforms to surrounding development. Potential, non-residential uses include a community based police substation, a community center, and a library. This mixing of uses provides for a dynamic community. People get out of their cars and walk more, thus increasing the opportunity for neighbors to get to know each other. The Smyre Drive corridor has historically served as the "community center" and thus would be best suited for neighborhood scale non-residential development. Existing non-residential buildings should be considered for this development as shown on the Smyre charette design plan. Multi-family development does add to the mix and variety in the neighborhood, but in order for it to be accepted, the design standards must be raised. Large-scale apartment developments may not be appropriate, whereas a group home for senior adults may add to the community. This scenario is particularly feasible with the community's proximity to the hospital. Development proposals of this nature must be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine their compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

Streets – Function and Form

Streets serve two primary purposes. Streets are the medium by which people move from one place to another, serving both automotive and non-automotive traffic. Streets are also the most prevalent public spaces in a community and therefore produce an image of the neighborhood.

Functional Streets

Excess traffic speeds pose a danger to automobile drivers and pedestrians. In the principles of "traffic calming" priority is given to the safety and convenience of the pedestrian rather than through traffic. Both Court Drive and Smyre Drive suffer from cut-through traffic with destination points other than the Smyre community. Traffic calming devices may be needed in the future if this type of traffic is shown to be significant. Reductions in speed limits, speed humps, chicanes, and round-a-bouts are just a few forms of traffic calming that can be used in residential neighborhoods. In fact, a modified round-a-bout could be used at the intersection of Court Drive and Smyre Drive. This blind intersection would benefit from a traffic control and the round-a-bout would add a central focal point to the community. Visibility problems are also a concern at the intersection of Fair Oaks Drive and Smyre Drive near the railroad underpass.

Adjacent development is one factor that may increase cut-through traffic. For this reason, Smyre citizens prefer that minimal connections be made between the Smyre road network and the proposed Mt. Holly

connector. Neighborhood traffic calming can compliment the construction of the connector. Some connections are required to provide Smyre residents with easy access to the future thoroughfare, however the stability of the neighborhood is dependant upon the continued existence of narrow, neighborhood scale streets (which have worked so well in the past). The *internal* Smyre street system relies on street connectivity. Streets that have been closed off reduce these internal connections and force motorists onto other streets, thereby increasing traffic flow.

Drainage problems and paving maintenance have been recurring issues along community roadways. As drainage ditches become filled with trash, debris, and sediment, water is unable to flow off the street. Currently no curbing is present along Smyre streets. Roll curbing is an option for Smyre streets when regular road maintenance is performed. Some streets in the community are privately held and thus are not on the City's maintenance schedule, while other gravel streets have never been paved. Unpaved roads and unmaintained roads are not only a danger to motorists and pedestrians, but also affect community identity, appearance, and civic spirit.

Attractive Streets

Great communities pay attention to the design of the public realm -- the streets, parks, and greenways. These public spaces that we inhabit on a daily basis form our sense of identity in the neighborhood and serve as the foundation of our memories of place. Narrow streets that are shaded by rows of trees slow down traffic and create an environment for the pedestrian and the bicycle. Smyre already has narrow streets which were put in place with the original village. Homes are situated close to the streets, offering a distinct boundary to this important public space. Sidewalks are suggested for the major streets within the Smyre community. Both Court Drive and Smyre Drive already receive a fair amount of pedestrian traffic and these streets provide connections to several destination points including Carolina Mills and a variety of office and service developments around the hospital. Other sidewalks should be added to neighborhood streets, such as Wellman Street, as redevelopment occurs and need warrants. Street trees planted along these two main streets would provide safety for pedestrians, shade the street, define the public space, and beautify the neighborhood. Decorative street lamps would add the finishing touches to the streetscape and further enhance the pedestrian experience within Smyre.

Potential Smyre Drive sidewalk installation and streetscape improvements

<u>Community amenities</u>

Green Space

The Smyre community has expressed concern over the lack of amenities for all ages, but especially for children. Historically, the Smyre neighborhood was rich with recreational activities for all ages. Through the charette process, it became apparent that Smyre residents wanted more open space, for both *passive* and *active* recreation. Carolina Mills has donated a piece of property in the northwest section of the neighborhood for use as a passive park. The City of Gastonia is working on the drainage and landscaping plans for the 1.4 acres of property. Once complete, this passive

Proposed ball fields

park will contain picnic tables and benches for rest and relaxation and will be an enormous asset to the community. Recommended projects include the construction of a variety of ball fields (softball, soccer), basketball courts, pocket parks, and play areas. Vacant land in the center of the neighborhood would be ideal for these recreational uses. As property develops within the neighborhood public spaces should remain an important priority. Connecting green space should be reflected in any development proposals and on site designs.

Proposed pocket park on corner of Smyre Drive and Fair Oaks Drive

In addition, a series of walking trails is proposed throughout the community. These trails in combination with the sidewalks will connect citizens to the new park and the future recreational ball fields/play areas. The closure of the Norfolk-Southern railroad along Highway 7 reveals the exciting potential for a green trail along the rail right-of-way. This area is currently wooded or used for community gardens, which can be incorporated into a walking trail project. The rail trails will connect into the larger network of community trail connections that will link residents to the new park at Millstone Drive, the pocket park at Smyre and Fair Oaks Drive, and other future recreational facilities.

Entranceways

Public spaces are our "urban living rooms," and they can be enhanced by the incorporation of details such as neighborhood signage at community entrances. In the Smyre community signage will be placed at the railroad entrance off of Highway 7, at the Court Drive entrance, and at the Ebony Avenue entrance. This will help to identify the community and provide a source of pride in the community.

The residents of Smyre want and need a community center to focus neighborhood activities. This central meeting place could house classes on literacy, prenatal health, and computer proficiency. In addition social activities for senior adults and after school care for children could be put into operation in the community center. Another recommended amenities include a bus stop shelter at the corner of Smyre Drive and Fraley Church Road and additional landscaping at focal points within the community. All of these proposals enhance the recreational amenities, visual character, local ecology, and overall image of the neighborhood by providing an alternative system of "natural" spaces to complement the public streetscapes.

Community Character

Community character is difficult to define, however the elements that contribute to community character are well documented. In the Smyre community, the unique features include narrow streets, minimal set backs, mill homes with large front porches, steep gabled roofs, wide roof overhangs, and wood construction materials.

The character of existing mill homes should be preserved and new additions or renovations should continue the architectural elements of the original homes. Efforts to rehabilitate the existing housing within the community are encouraged. Demolition should be limited to those very few areas where it is the only real option and a principle should be adopted throughout the neighborhood that original buildings should be refurbished creatively, and not demolished except in the most extreme

circumstances. In addition, major new buildings and infill development should match the compact arrangements and traditional building types of the neighborhood and of traditional American architecture in general. New homes built within the community should mirror those architectural features of original mill homes that make them unique. Community building designs that might fit suburban locations have no place in a neighborhood like Smyre.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Keep the Smyre neighborhood intact and strong

Objective 1.1: Prohibit the encroachment of non-neighborhood related uses into the Smyre neighborhood

The outside edges of the neighborhood, as defined on the plan map, should serve as barrier between neighborhood uses and non-neighborhood uses. Hospital related uses such as offices and multifamily developments will serve as protective buffers on the western side of the neighborhood. These uses (office and multifamily) should also be used to provide a buffer between the neighborhood and higher impact uses along the future Mt. Holly connector.

Objective 1.2: Encourage single-family residential development as the predominant land use in the community

Areas currently zoned R-4, which allows multi-family development, should be rezoned to R-2. In addition, areas zoned C-1 should be rezoned to R-2. If multi-family development or non-residential development is proposed in the future, a site plan with building elevations, landscaping plans, and parking arrangements should be provided by the developer. Non-residential development should require a conditional use rezoning process. (see Goal #4)

Objective 1.3: Encourage mixed-use in the center of the community

Neighborhood commercial and civic uses should only locate in areas historically used as commercial centers (along Smyre Drive between Court Drive and Fair Oaks Drive) and should blend with the residential surroundings in scale, placement, architecture, and materials. Existing, non-residential buildings should be considered for commercial and civic uses as depicted on the charette design plan. (also see Goal #4)

Goal 2: Develop functional, attractive and safe streetscapes

Objective 2.1: Enable street connections that will enhance the functionality of the street system

Full street connectivity should be established ***within*** the neighborhood. Streets that have been closed should be reopened to reflect the original grid pattern of the streets. Street connections to the future Mt. Holly connector should be limited to reduce non-neighborhood traffic. Major, neighborhood through streets, such as Millstone Drive and Long Cabin Drive, will make logical connections to the new thoroughfare.

Objective 2.2: Use traffic calming devices to produce safer streets

When necessary, use speed humps, speed limit changes, round-a-bouts, etc. to slow traffic on neighborhood streets.

Objective 2.3: Promote regular street maintenance

Poor street drainage and the prevalence of private and unpaved streets combine are both dangerous and affect community pride. Private streets that meet the appropriate standards should be brought into the City's system and roll curbing should be added to major community streets as maintenance is performed.

Objective 2.4: Add sidewalks to major roads within the neighborhood

Sidewalks should be added to major neighborhood streets such as Smyre Drive, Court Drive, and Wellman Street.

Objective 2.5: Add street trees and decorative lighting along major neighborhood spines

Street trees will function with sidewalks to produce a safe pedestrian environment and enhance the neighborhood's public spaces. Decorative lighting will beautify the neighborhood and provide a coordinate look to the streetscapes.

Goal 3: Encourage the development of community amenities

Objective 3.1: Create recreational opportunities (active and passive)

As development occurs within the neighborhood, new ball fields, parks, and trails should be added.

Objective 3.2: Develop and maintain scenic community focal points

Decorative signage and landscaping should be installed at neighborhood entranceways. Other community focal points, like the center of a round-a-bout or a community center should be enhanced through landscaping and community volunteer work.

Objective 3.3: Encourage community based classes, events, and civic participation

The creation of a community center for classes, social, and civic events is encouraged.

Goal 4: Maintain the traditional character of the Smyre Mill Village

Objective 4.1: New development should be compatible with existing development in placement and form and capitalize on the strong urban pattern of the original mill village

New construction should blend in with existing buildings in terms of design principles. Contemporary architecture is encouraged as long as it adheres to neighborhood design characteristics. The following principles provide a general guideline for new development.

Single Family Residential Development

- Buildings should be oriented to conform with surrounding buildings.
- Setbacks should mimic the predominant setback of the block on which development is proposed.
- New development should mimic the architectural style of existing homes in their massing and external treatment. ***Porches*** *should form a predominant motif of house designs;* ***Building walls*** *should be wood, brick, stucco, or vinyl siding;* ***Roofs*** *should be clad in wood shingles, slate, asphalt*

shingles, tile shingles, or standing seam metal and be steeply sloped.

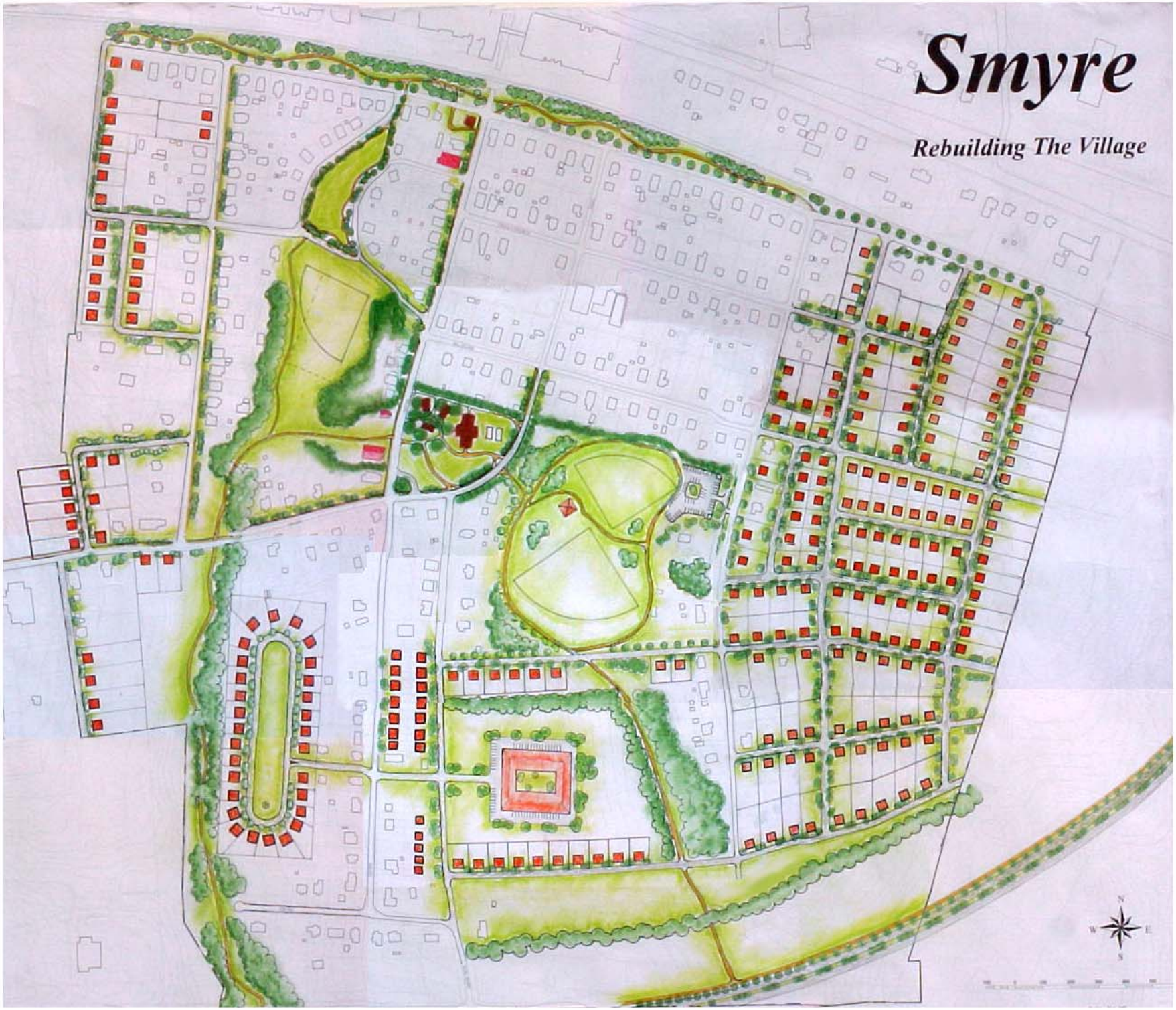
- Each building should be designed to form part of a larger composition of the area in which it is situated. Adjacent buildings should thus be of similar scale, height and configuration.
- The basic height, scale, texture, and openings of existing buildings should be maintained.

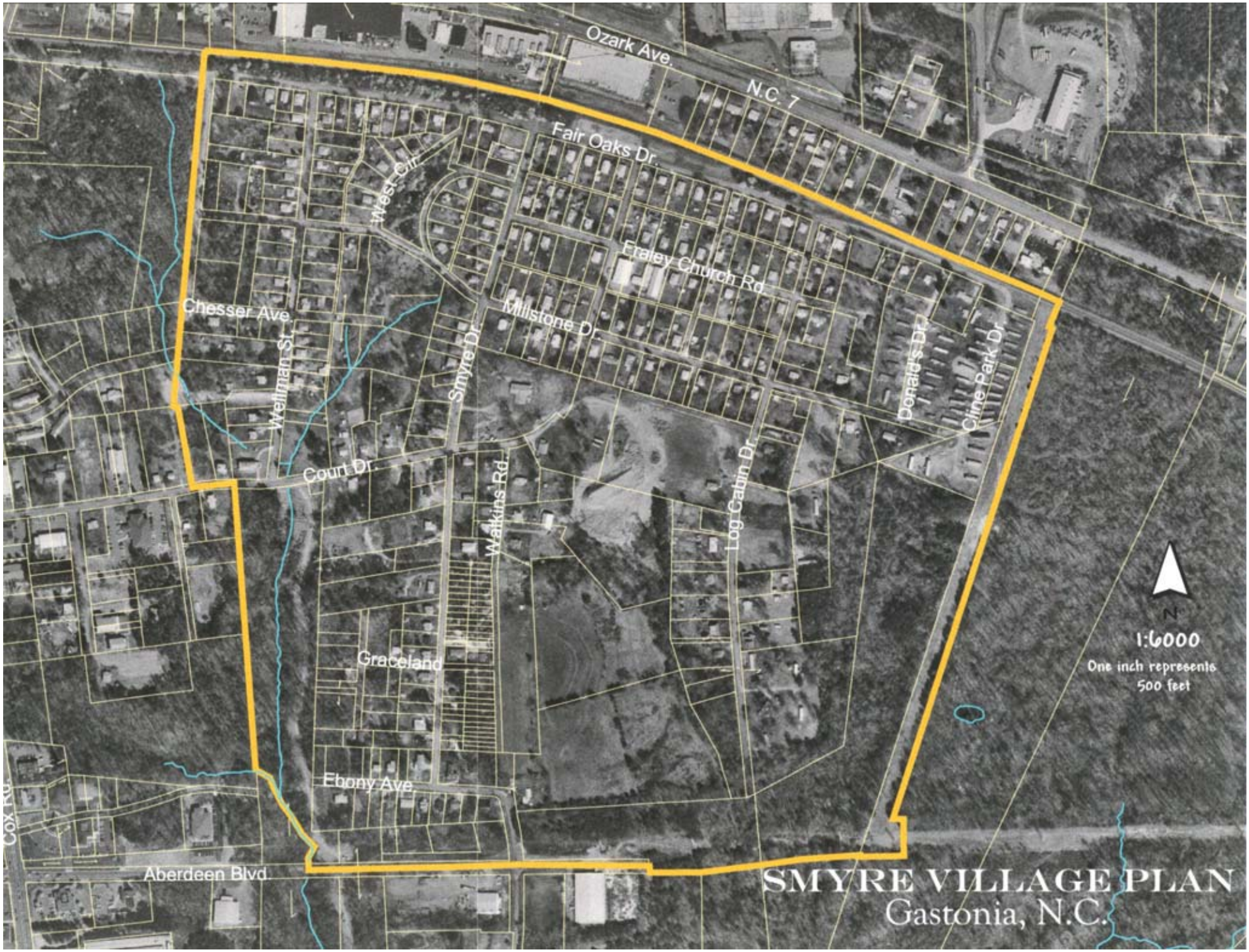
Multi-family and Non-residential Development

- ❑ Adaptive reuse is encouraged for new neighborhood business or civic oriented development.
- ❑ Non-residential uses should locate within the existing non-residential buildings on Smyre Drive, between Court Drive and Fair Oaks Drive (as depicted on the charette design plan). New building construction will also be considered within this area.
- ❑ Properties should only be rezoned using the conditional use process. This process requires the developer to provide extensive information on the type of development and the way a new or renovated building will look. Developers are encouraged to meet with surrounding residents before submitting their rezoning application. Public hearings are held before the City of Gastonia Planning Commission and City Council.

General standards

- Setbacks shall mimic the predominant setback of the block on which development is proposed.
- Streetside parking is encouraged, otherwise parking lots should be placed beside or behind buildings.
- Buildings should be oriented to conform with surrounding buildings.
- Building materials must be compatible with existing residential development.
- No pole signs will be permitted.


Smyre
Rebuilding The Village


Ozark Ave.
N.C. 7
Fair Oaks Dr.
West Cir.
Eraley Church Rd.
Chesser Ave.
Wellman St.
Smyre Dr.
Millstone Dr.
Donald's Dr.
Cline Park Dr.
Court Dr.
Walkins Rd.
Log Cabin Dr.
Graceland
Ebony Ave.
Aberdeen Blvd.
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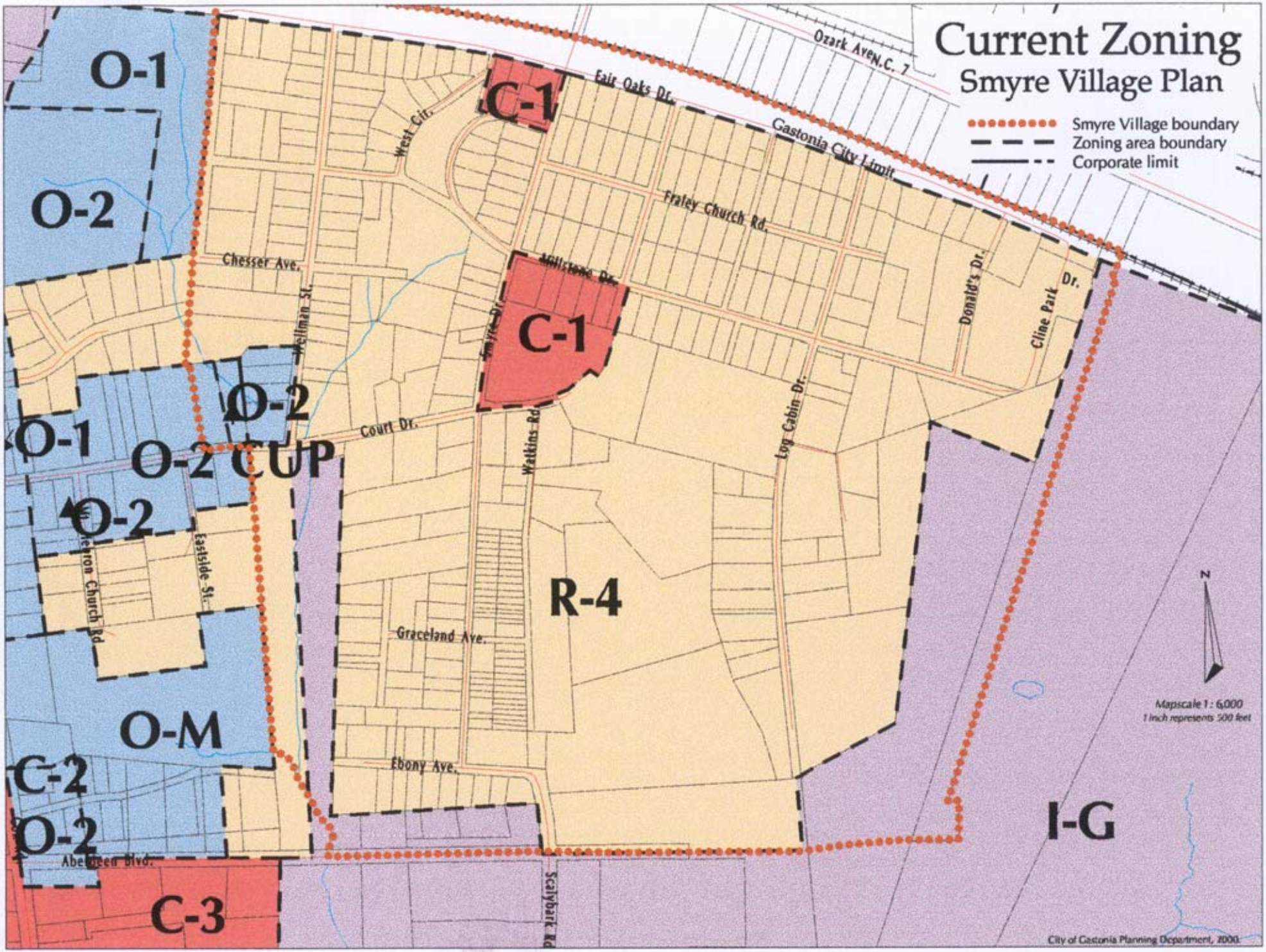
SMYRE VILLAGE PLAN
Gastonia, N.C.


Current Zoning
Smyre Village Plan
Smyre Village boundary
Zoning area boundary
Corporate limit
O-1
O-2
C-1
O-2 CUP
R-4
O-M
C-2
C-3
I-G
Ozark Ave
N.C. 7
Fair Oaks Dr.
Gastonia City Limit
West Cir.
Fraley Church Rd.
Chesser Ave.
Wellman St.
Millstone Dr.
Smyre Dr.
Donald's Dr.
Cline Park Dr.
Court Dr.
Watkins Rd.
Log Cabin Dr.
Eastside St.
Graceland Ave.
Ebony Ave.
Abercrombie Rd.
Scalybark Rd.
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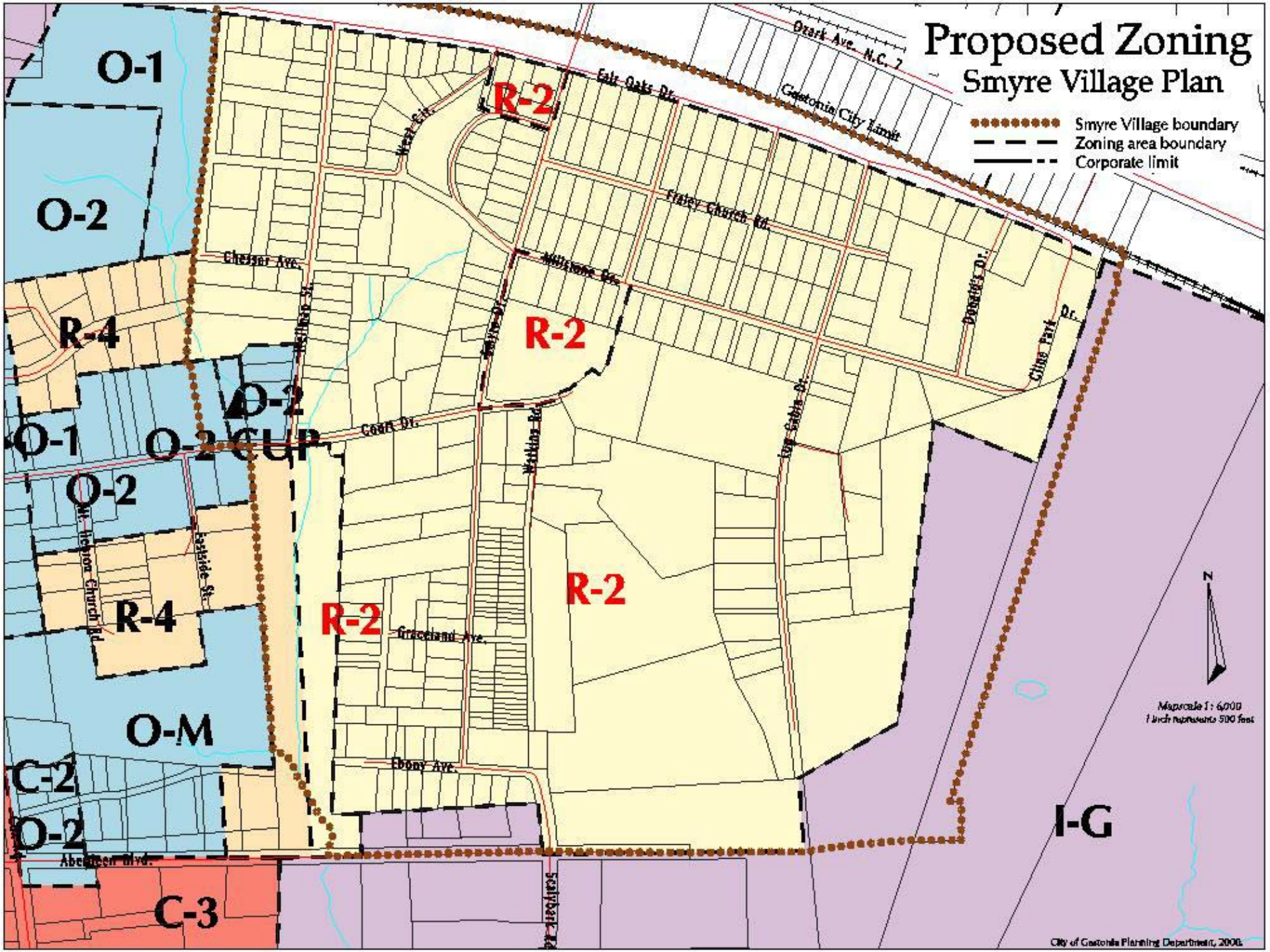
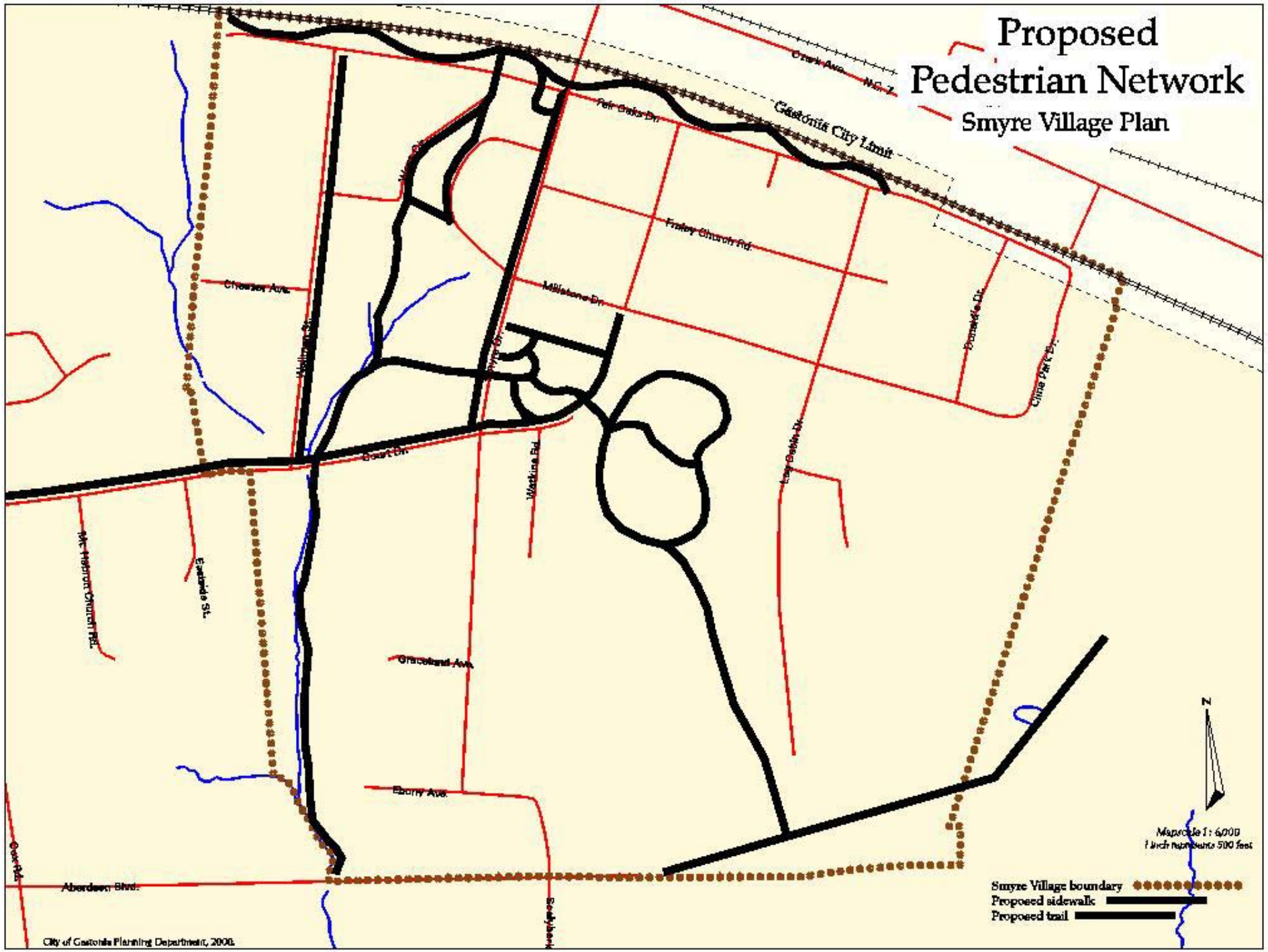
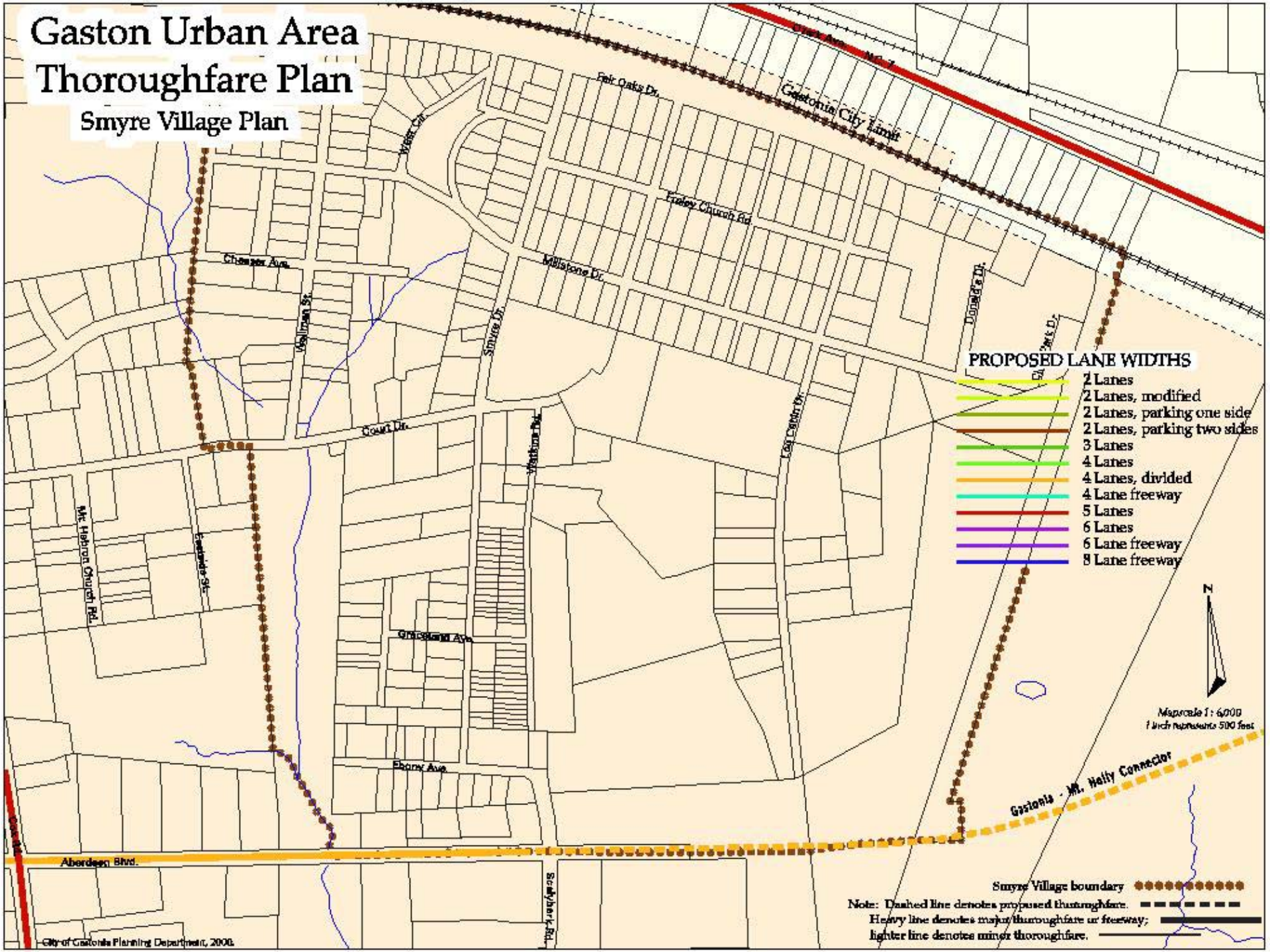
Mapscale 1 : 6,000
1 inch represents 500 feet
City of Gastonia Planning Department, 2000


Proposed Zoning
Smyre Village Plan
Smyre Village boundary
Zoning area boundary
Corporate limit
Ozark Ave. N.C. 7
Gastonia City Limit
Fair Oaks Dr.
Fraley Church Rd.
Millstone Dr.
Chesser Ave.
Court Dr.
Watkins Rd.
Lum Cabin Dr.
Donald's Dr.
Cline Park Dr.
Mt. Hebron Church Rd.
Eastside St.
Graceland Ave.
Ebony Ave.
Aberdeen Blvd.
Scalybark Rd.
O-1
O-2
R-4
O-2 CUP
O-M
C-2
C-3
R-2
I-G
N
Mapscale 1: 6,000
1 inch represents 500 feet
City of Gastonia Planning Department, 2000.


Proposed
Pedestrian Network
Smyre Village Plan
Gastonia City Limit
Ozark Ave.
N.C. 7
Fair Oaks Dr.
Fraley Church Rd.
Millstone Dr.
Chester Ave.
Wellman St.
Dorset Dr.
Watkins Rd.
Log Cabin Dr.
Donaldie Dr.
Cline Park Dr.
Mt. Hebron Church Rd.
Eastside St.
Graceland Ave.
Ebony Ave.
Aberdeen Blvd.
Oak Rd.
Sealyhark
N
Mapscale 1 : 6,000
1 inch represents 500 feet
Smyre Village boundary
Proposed sidewalk
Proposed trail
City of Gastonia Planning Department, 2000.


Gaston Urban Area
Thoroughfare Plan
Smyre Village Plan
Gastonia City Limit
Fair Oaks Dr.
Freley Church Rd.
Millstone Dr.
Chesser Ave.
Wellman St.
Smyre Dr.
Court Dr.
Donald's Dr.
Lee Cabin Dr.
Mt. Hebron Church Rd.
Eastside St.
Ebony Ave.
Aberdeen Blvd.
Gastonia - Mt. Holly Connector
PROPOSED LANE WIDTHS
2 Lanes
2 Lanes, modified
2 Lanes, parking one side
2 Lanes, parking two sides
3 Lanes
4 Lanes
4 Lanes, divided
4 Lane freeway
5 Lanes
6 Lanes
6 Lane freeway
8 Lane freeway
N
Mapscale 1 : 6,000
1 inch represents 500 feet
Smyre Village boundary
Note: Dashed line denotes proposed thoroughfare.
Heavy line denotes major thoroughfare or freeway;
lighter line denotes minor thoroughfare.
City of Gastonia Planning Department, 2000.

Smyre Drive

Sidewalk Installation and Streetscape Improvements

Current View

Removed Overhead Wiring

Added Sidewalk Extensions

Added Street Trees

Added Decorative Streetlights

Smyre Drive

Pocket park on corner of Smyre Drive and Fair Oaks Drive

Current View

Removed Overhead Wiring

Added Trees, Gazebo, and Shrubs

Added Sidewalks and Lighting

Appendix

Smyre Planning Charette

Residents' Concerns and Suggestions

August 19, 1999

Need to Change or Improve

- Need sidewalks
- Pave unpaved streets
- Resurface existing paved streets
- Need better drainage for streets
- Cars drive too fast
- Need multi-purpose recreation area (softball, soccer, and basketball fields for pick-up games)
- Need four way stops for blind intersections (example: intersection of Court Drive and Smyre Drive)
- Paving and landscaping at underpass - address visibility problems
- Improve entranceways
- Would like community greenways
- Need a community center
- Define neighborhood boundary between Smyre and medical area – zoning issue
- Would like a convenience store
- "Mill" is a negative connotation for neighborhood
- Study intersection traffic controls
- Street connections needed (example: Path Street)
- Housing rehabilitation
- Nearby jobs
- Need business zoning on Wellman Street
- Enforce trash can ordinance
- Address private streets – make public
- Bike and walking paths
- Overall cleaning up – trash, weeds, dilapidation, junk
- Maintenance of area between road and railroad
- Want aesthetic street lighting

What We Hold Dear

- Intimacy
- Single family residential
- Churches
- Historic buildings (example: Methodist Church)
- No cut through traffic
- Beware of connection of Smyre Drive to Aberdeen
- Our youth and their minds (potential of our youth)