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Haywood Road Vision Plan 2012: Recommendations

Recommendations and Strategies - Transportation and Streetscape:

1. Coordinating with the NCDOT, a sidewalk replacement and curb-cut closure project should be undertaken focusing on the longest curb-cuts first and continuing throughout the corridor. (A program to expand the width of sidewalks in places can be coordinated with this effort).
2. Continue strategic placement of bike lanes along the corridor by coordinating with neighboring businesses and bicycle stakeholders while balancing the needs for on-street parking spaces.
3. Stay involved and review plans for the redevelopment of the I-240 interchange to ensure multi-modal transportation safety.
4. Support efforts to implement a project using the Complete Streets Policy along Haywood Road.
5. Develop a streetscape pallet of details and implement in one or two pilot locations based on the context of the surrounding area to provide a prototype for the corridor.
6. Create a list of crosswalks and pedestrian signals that are needed or in need of upgrade along the corridor with priorities and strategies for funding.
7. Bring to fruition the plans for a transit hub along Haywood Road to improve service along the corridor.
8. Research grants for opportunities that may fund streetscape improvements as a strategy to leverage private investment along the corridor.
9. Prepare for a public-private partnership with the community to enhance key junctions on the ART routes to include well-designed shelters and appropriate landscaping to enhance their appearance.

Recommendations and Strategies - Historic Preservation:

1. As zoning regulations are updated based on recommendations from the plan, incorporate historic preservation goals as a 'trade-off' for approval of a development proposal.
2. Consider local 'land marking' of historic properties to preserve the stories and places of west Asheville.
3. Develop a west Asheville history trail similar to the urban trail in downtown Asheville.
4. Support the efforts to create a web-based history portal to highlight the stories and places of west Asheville.
5. Create a database of historic properties that may be demolished due to lack of maintenance and neglect and develop strategies to stabilize / redevelop them.
6. Support the two local historic districts by using special signage designating the areas.
7. Pursue façade restoration initiatives to preserve historic buildings, which may be through low-interest loans in a revolving loan program.
8. Provide a building inventory of the areas outside of the two listed historic districts to note other structures and housing stock to emphasize their importance. Historic plaques could be used to share notable events and dates of buildings, etc.
9. Ensure that any additional building standards and regulations allow and encourage the preservation of existing historic structures.
10. Working with property owners to pursue the transfer and protection of the Sulphur Springs Road property and identify ways and funding to restore the site.

Recommendations and Strategies - Zoning and Land Use:

1. Develop an overlay for the sections of the corridor except the existing two CBD zoned areas to focus development in ways that meet City-adopted strategic goals: pedestrian oriented development; development to leverage investment; support for the tax base; increase residential densities to support the transit system; and economic goals of the corridor.
2. As the UDO is amended over time, ensure that an overlay along Haywood Road continues to be preferred over rezoning the corridor to an appropriate new zoning district.
3. Participate in development incentive ordinances to include the priorities supported in the development preferences survey completed in 2011 and identified by the Vision Plan.

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4. Create design standards like the ones used in the requirements for the *CBD* zoned areas which include pedestrian oriented development, fenestration along the street, street wall development, incentives to encourage historic preservation and multi-family housing.
5. Acknowledge the historic variety of building setbacks along the corridor by providing setback options that can be used for incentives for green areas and open space in new construction.
6. Designate limited opportunities for drive-through facilities for financial institutions and adopt specific design criteria to mitigate negative impacts to the corridor and the surrounding neighbors. This type of facility could be designated for City Council review and approval so that negative impacts can be carefully considered.
7. Mitigate development impacts on residential areas adjacent to commercial development along the corridor.
8. Encourage the creation of additional usable green space along Haywood Road such as plaza areas and parks as a trade-off for additional development potential.
9. Set a standard for height for the non-CBD zoned areas and provide opportunities to exceed the height by one story for example with approval by City Council for projects that include community supported goals.
10. Require new buildings to be built at two-stories to meet City adopted goals, encourage mixed-use development and leverage the investment along the corridor. Allow expansions and renovations of historic one-story structures as a tool to preserve historic buildings and community character.
11. Direct new development that is inconsistent to the identified goals of the Haywood Road Vision Plan to other corridors that are more suitable for the particular style of development. For example direct big-box development to locations along Patton Avenue so that pedestrian character along Haywood Road is preserved.
12. Ensure a buffer between commercial uses and residential neighbors that is sized to correspond to the height of the development and the impacts of the use.

Recommendations and Strategies - Economic Development:

1. Initiate a parking lot sharing program along the corridor focusing initially on churches and eventually including businesses with excess capacity or daytime and weekday hours that would be willing to share their parking lots to support community businesses.
2. Consider ordinance changes that would reduce or eliminate the requirement for off-street parking spaces for business (already in place for the Central Business District) to remove a hurdle to additional investment and encourage new businesses along Haywood Road. This could operate along with the shared parking program for the corridor.
3. Encourage business incubation spaces for start-up businesses at affordable rates; this may be a part of an incentive during the review of larger mixed-use projects that may be proposed for the corridor which had support in the 2011 community preference survey.
4. Expand the *wayfinding* signage program to additional areas surrounding west Asheville and improve the gateway features to the neighborhood.
5. Develop effective marketing programs for businesses along Haywood Road. This may be a program lead by WABA.
6. Incentivize green building and affordable housing projects, which may include the ability to build larger structures or taller structures if community goals are met.
7. Streetscape improvements and burying the overhead power lines could positively influence the economic vitality of Haywood Road. This economic development strategy was successfully implemented in downtown Asheville on many streets.
8. Haywood Road community events should be developed to promote the area.
9. Allow for the growth in light manufacturing or light industrial uses along the corridor so long as the negative impacts may be mitigated for the neighboring area. Specific approval processes may be necessary to ensure compatibility with the corridor goals.
10. Enact a wording amendment to the City Code of Ordinances to require signage in parking lots where the owners will tow unauthorized vehicles using the lot; this will make it clear to patrons frequenting Haywood Road businesses.

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Recommendations and Strategies - Safety Concerns:

1. Consider the *Haywood Road Pedestrian and Safety Audit* and use it to identify and prioritize locations for pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian signals. Improved pedestrian facilities encourages walking and more people on the street makes the entire area safer.
2. Support for Haywood Road to be a case study for street and sidewalk improvements to include multi-modal transportation options consistent the Complete Streets Policy adopted by the City of Asheville in 2012.
3. Continue the efforts of social media sources to communicate to neighbors and neighborhoods when crimes occur or to report unusual neighborhood activity.
4. Promote the Asheville Police Department program for business and home owners where community resource officers can perform an on-site safety audit to identify crime targets to deter crime on parcels and against businesses.
5. Identify funding sources that focus on improving sidewalk sections and reducing the length and number of driveway curb-cuts to improve safety and traffic flow.
6. Continue efforts to reduce graffiti and make use of community service volunteers to remove it.

Recommendations and Strategies - Neighborhood Related Issues:

1. Streetscape concerns are important for neighborhood access. 98% of survey takers support design standards that encourage pedestrian access and connectivity in building and site development.
2. Special signage for different neighborhoods and the two historic districts could also encourage walking and enhance the experience of visitors. 'QR' codes could be linked to tell those stories.
3. History projects are important to capture the stories of the past and could include story-telling; photo projects, history walking 'trails'.
4. Pursue efforts to partner with churches to share their parking lots to help the parking overflow problem that is happening along side streets in the neighborhoods.
5. Buffer commercial impacts including noise, building height and setbacks, sound, etc into the residential areas. This may include rules for quiet hours for businesses along the corridor.
6. Maintain business diversity and expand services that include neighborhood and family services. Entertainment venues for families were popularly mentioned as 'needed' along the corridor. A local hardware store was the most commonly referenced specific business that is missing along the corridor.
7. Identify partners to grow local businesses. Example, churches sometimes have underutilized buildings, office space and kitchens that could be shared for business uses.
8. Green space along Haywood Road is needed and could be a part of the important community trade-offs when development is proposed. 68% of survey takers said that this would be a community-supported goal during the survey. Other green spaces may take the form of greenways that would link points along Haywood Road to other park areas.
9. Greenway sections may also be improved with connections to Haywood Road and become a part of specific developments. These segments include Hominy Creek and the Rhododendron Creek greenway segments and Waynesville Avenue and Vermont Avenue among others.
10. Speeding in residential areas needs to be monitored and traffic-calming measures should be studied on a case-by-case basis.
11. A neighborhood coalition could be organized with a variety of duties such as safety watches, or 'welcome wagons' for new residents.
12. General cleanliness and unwanted vegetation in specific locations is a concern and as well as on-going need for graffiti removal. Awareness and education for property owners may be needed.