



US 521 / SC 9 Corridor Study *Moving Forward*

Focus Area Studies

Chapter 7



Focus areas are small sites within a study area that face unique challenges and present opportunities to demonstrate recommended best development, redevelopment, and infill practices. Specific design elements for focus areas are intended to serve as guidelines for future development activity in the study area. Focus areas are a critical tool to help visualize how recommendations and improvements will take shape in the study area beyond the planning phase of the study.

The consultant team worked with members of the PAC to identify six key focus areas for further study. Together, these focus areas represent the most influential properties for implementing the community's vision and examining the opportunities associated with thematic challenges along the corridor. These challenges include:

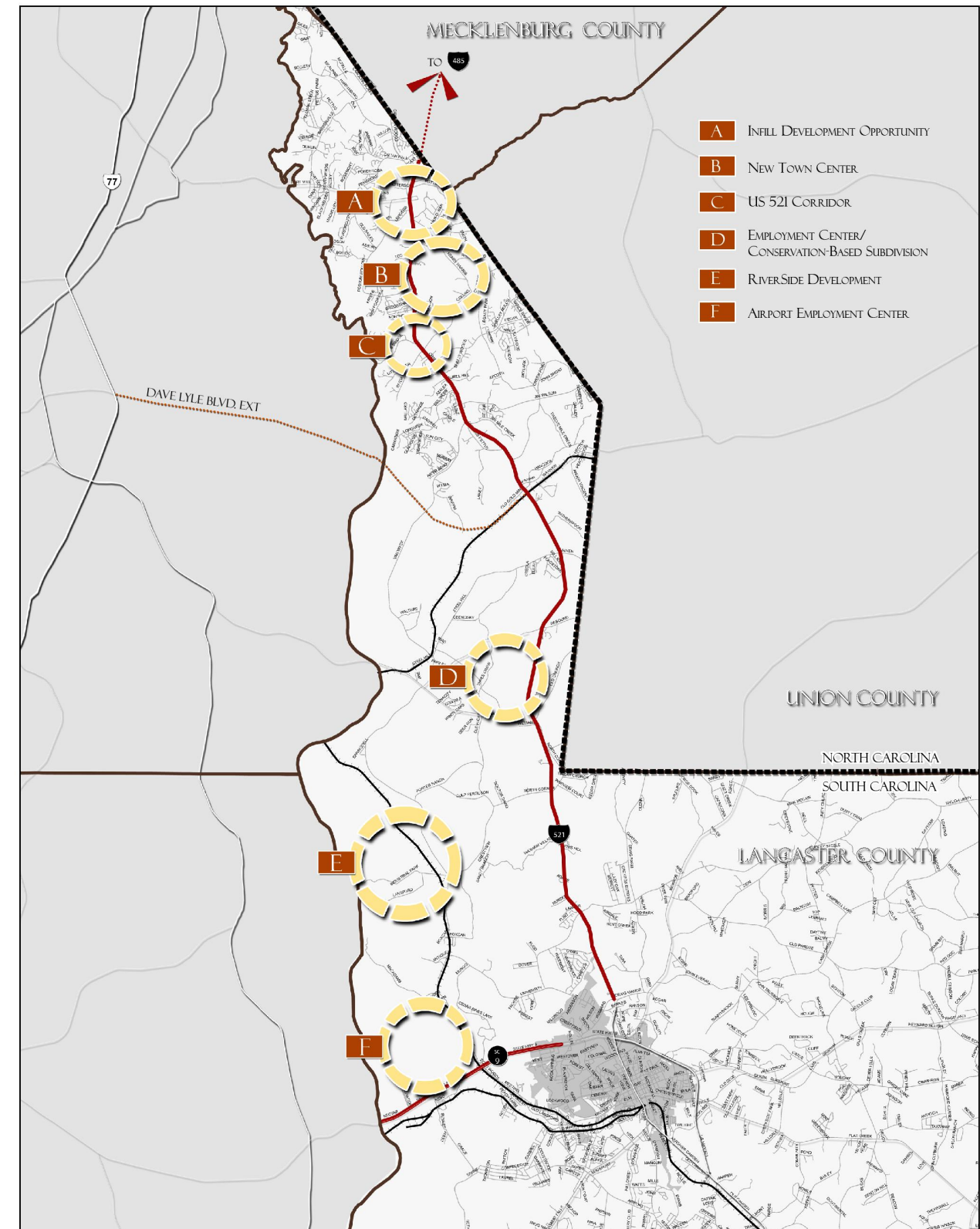
- access management,
- traffic congestion,
- preservation of environmentally sensitive and significant areas,
- increasing economic development opportunities,
- incorporating multiple land uses in a complimentary way; and
- promoting complementary development styles that maintain the character of the surrounding area.

Criteria considered for selected sites: a wide geographical distribution, areas that represented a broad variety of issues/opportunities in the community, and areas that addressed priorities and potential conflict locations within the community. Themes that emerged during the process of site selection included infill/redevelopment opportunities, conservation-based subdivision initiatives, access management, town center and mixed use developments, and enhancement of recreational opportunities.

The type of land uses or development patterns assumed in the site design studies are for illustrative purposes only, and could vary significantly based on future landowner interests, development approvals, or location of available infrastructure. However, property owners with a similar vision, or with sites sharing similar characteristics, should consider the best development practices highlighted in this chapter when developing their own land.

Focus Area Locations

The focus areas are shown on the Focus Area Map to the right. Selected sites are dispersed throughout the study area: four sites are located adjacent to US 521, one site is adjacent to SC 9, and one site is adjacent to the Catawba River. It should be noted that the focus areas presented in this chapter were reviewed and approved by the PAC.



Focus Area Map

Planning Process

Site design studies were completed for all of the focus areas. They represent possible build-out scenarios for undeveloped (or underdeveloped) parcels that promote mobility, development and redevelopment opportunities, and a sense of place in the study area. Each site design study included an illustrative master plan concept and three-dimensional perspective drawings. Drawings were done over aerial photography with printed property lines, environmental constraints, and street networks. All of the site design studies were prepared with input from members of the PAC.

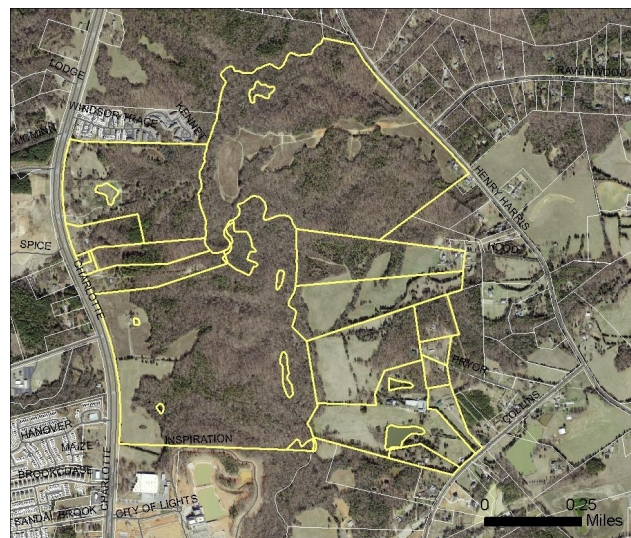
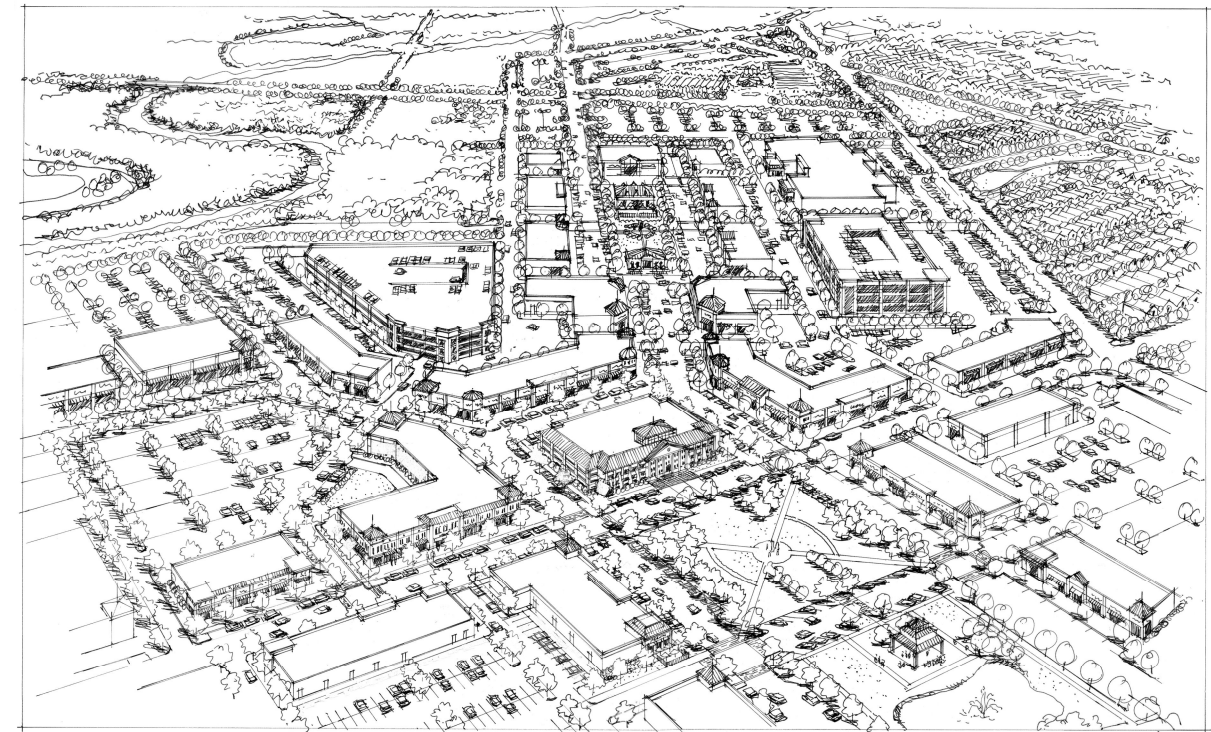
An inventory of existing conditions was completed for focus areas using geographic information systems (GIS) data, aerial photography, field photos, and windshield surveys. This information was used to characterize the study area based on existing land use patterns and development conditions. Particular attention was paid to the surrounding and existing built environment. The following conditions were noted in the study areas: distribution of open space, existing neighborhood fabric, size and character of existing buildings, land use mix, character of streets, available travel modes, internal and external connections, location of parking, and interface of properties vs. the public street.

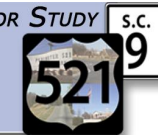
A review was also conducted of locally adopted plans, programs, and policies prepared by and for Lancaster County. This information was used to inventory existing development controls and identify potential “barriers” for implementing development alternatives.

Based on the input provided during PAC meetings and public workshops, the existing conditions analysis, and the review of locally adopted plans, programs, and policies, site design studies were created for each focus area.

Site Design Studies

A summary of the site design studies completed for the six focus areas is provided on the following pages:



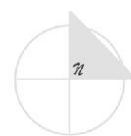


Infill Development Opportunity (A)

The Infill Development Opportunity site is an approximately 160 acre site in Indian Land, at the confluence of US 521 and SC 160. The area is served by water and sewer and functions as one of the primary gateways to Indian Land. The 521 Business/Office Park is located just northeast of the focus area and the Edgewater Corporate Center is located just to the southwest. The existing development pattern in the area is dominated by strip retail and flex-uses and includes the recently constructed Lowe's south of SC 160.

This focus area was chosen to illustrate one of many infill/redevelopment opportunities in the study area. The design focuses on access management (limiting driveways along US 521 and SC 160), promoting interconnectivity between uses, and expanding housing choice.

The rendering illustrates a mixture of residential (both townhomes and garden apartments), retail, flex employment, and office employment. The site also includes a neighborhood park and walking trails.



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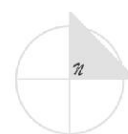


This drawing illustrates the portion of the master plan east of US 521. Instead of depicting a typical big box development with associated outparcels, all with access directly off of US 521, the site incorporates smaller scale retail all accessed from one main entry into the development. Buildings are oriented interior to the site, with the parking placed behind the buildings.

Infill Development Opportunity (A)
Perspective Rendering

New Town Center (B)

The second master plan, B2, includes the same type of uses (residential, retail, and office), however the uses are integrated and interconnected. The site includes a true town center, with a main street, public squares, vertical mixed use, and civic buildings. Uses are oriented interior to the site, often overlooking a public square. An interconnected trail system offers an alternative to the automobile and the town green and public squares provide communal gathering spaces.



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New Town Center (B)
Perspective Rendering

This drawing illustrates the formal gathering square envisioned as a key component of a town center in Indian Land. All buildings look out onto the square, which is anchored by a prominent civic building.

The public space/green space remains un-programmed, allowing flexibility in the use and events at the site.

This drawing illustrates the mixed use town center component of the master plan. Office uses are located above retail and surface parking is replaced with a parking structure.

The trail system, connecting residents with retail and office uses, is located directly behind the center.

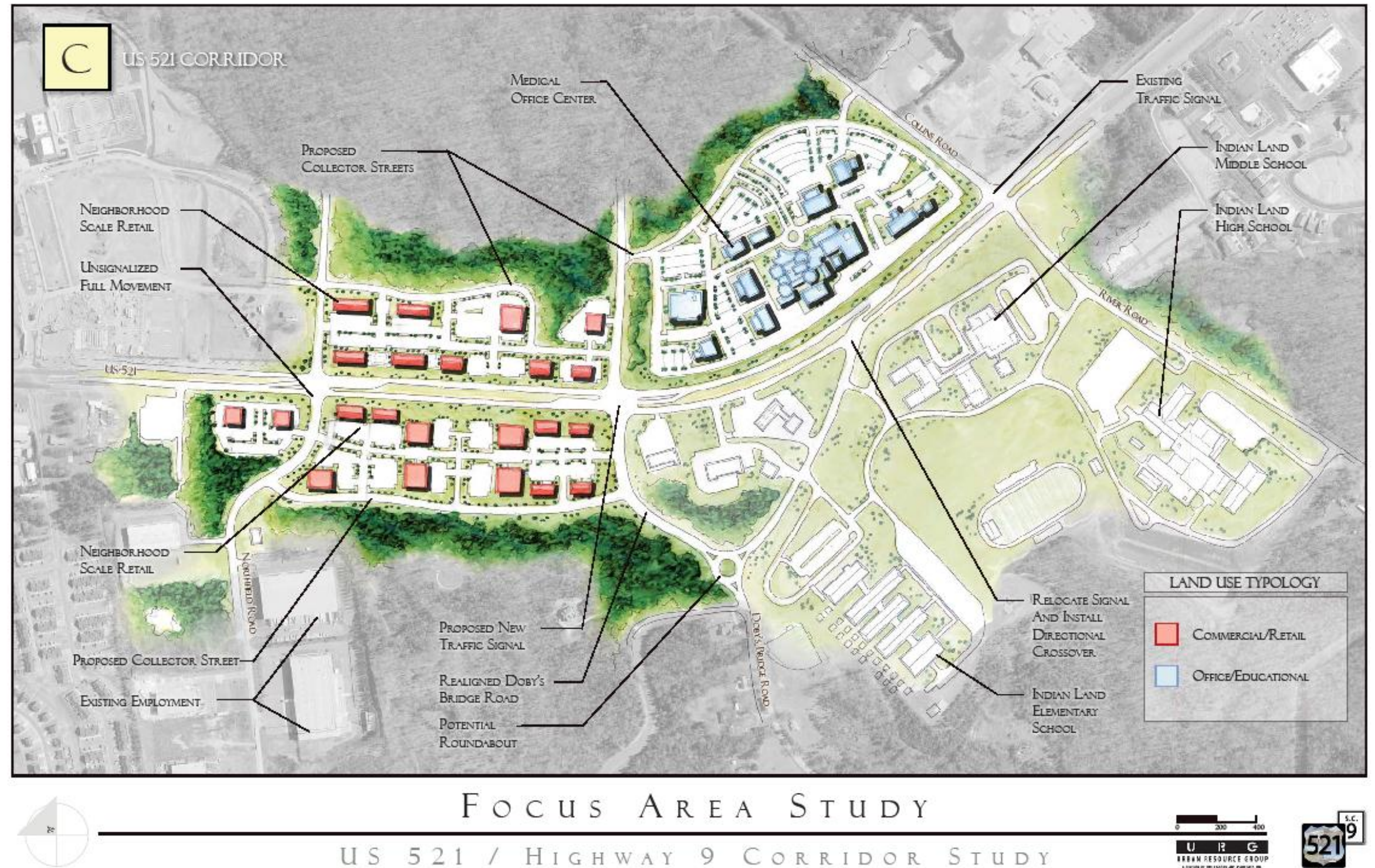


New Town Center (B)
Perspective Rendering

US 521 Corridor (C)

The US 521 Corridor site is located at the confluence of Doby's Bridge Road and US 521 and is roughly 200 acres in size. It is located just south of City of Light and includes all three schools in Indian Land. Currently, the site is largely undeveloped along US 521 with some scattered retail uses. This site focuses on properties adjacent to US 521 and illustrates some of the key access management concepts detailed in the recommended access management strategy (see Transportation Chapter).

One of the main recommendations illustrated in this focus area is the realignment of Doby's Bridge Road. The realignment could potentially include a roundabout, the relocation of the existing traffic signal north, and the installation of a directional crossover (left-over) at the location of the current signal. These improvements are designed to enhance school circulation and improve the safety of the intersection of Doby's Bridge Road and US 521. The site also includes a new medical office center and several new collector streets, specifically around the retail uses, to limit driveway cuts along US 521 and provide more connectivity between businesses. The design encourages a "park once" mentality and/or walking between complementary uses in and around the development.





This drawing illustrates the concepts promoted in the access management strategy developed as a part of the study.

Driveway access is limited along US 521. Retail uses are developed as part of a master plan (which can be constructed in phases), to ensure design compatibility and connectivity.

Buildings are oriented interior to the site to promote walkability. A large buffer with street trees enhances the appearance of the US 521 corridor.

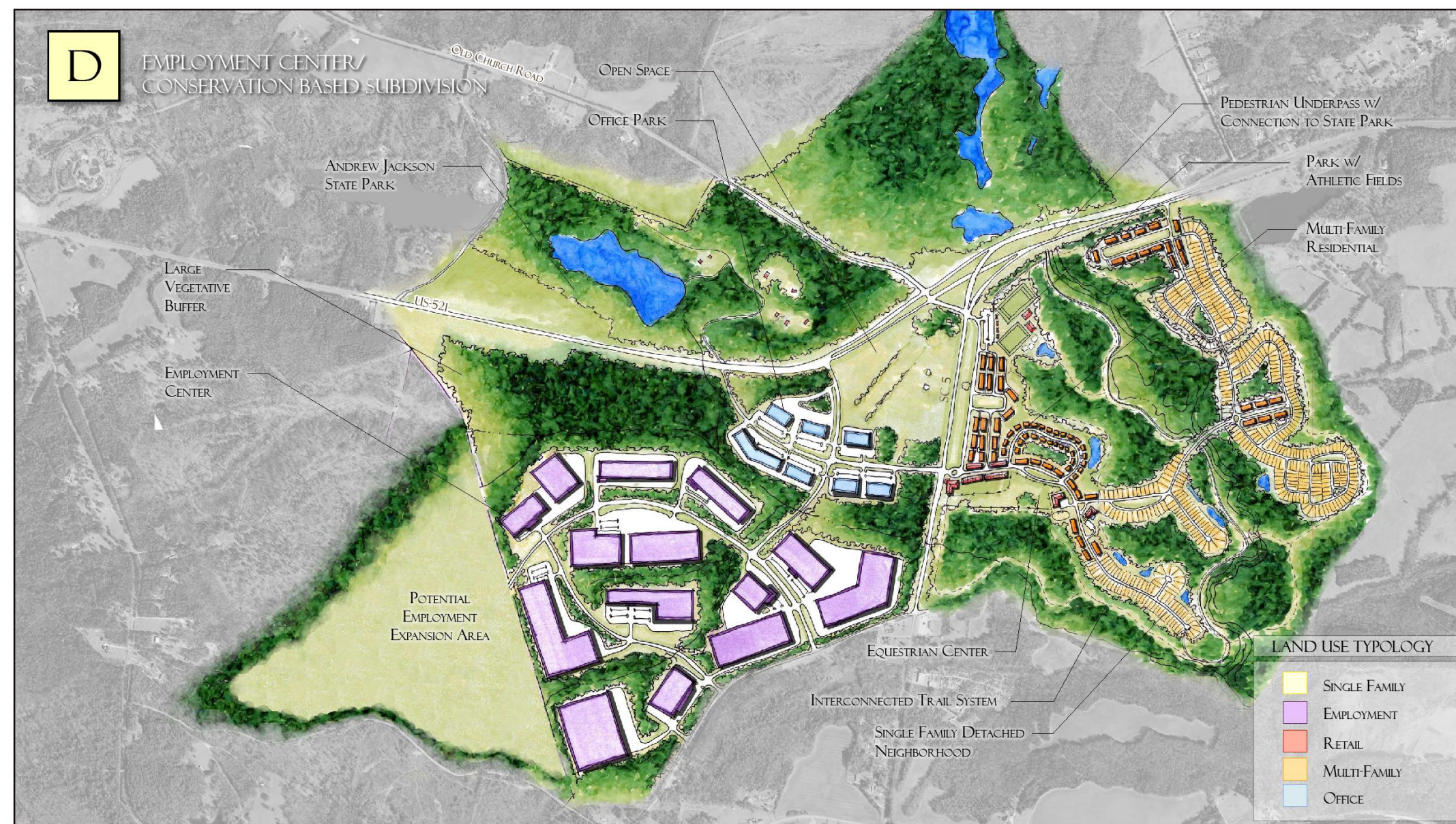
US Hwy 521 Corridor (C)
Perspective Rendering

Employment Center/ Conservation Based Subdivision (D)

Focus Area D, over 1,000 acres in size, is located at the intersection of US 521 and SC 5. The site is largely undeveloped, with some rural residential areas. It includes Andrew Jackson State Park and adjacent lands and offers some of the most pristine view sheds and rural vistas along the corridor. Limited utilities are currently available in the focus area.

This focus area was selected to illustrate a light development footprint for both employment and residential uses, demonstrating how they can co-exist on a single site. The area north of SC 5 represents an excellent location for both an industrial center and business center. Substantial buffers protect scenic view sheds and preserve the appearance of US 521, while also affording privacy between uses and amazing office views.

The area south of SC 5 illustrates a conservation based subdivision design. Density bonuses can be tools used to incentivize developers to develop alternatives to traditional subdivisions. In this example, the underlying zoning on the site allows for 1.5 dwelling units per acre, while this development program yields 2.6 dwelling units per acre. Even though the density is greater, the development contains large amounts of greenspace including an equestrian center, hiking trails, a community park, and a pedestrian underpass that connects the development to Andrew Jackson State Park. Additionally, the subdivision includes a small amount of neighborhood-servicing retail to meet the daily needs of neighborhood residents.



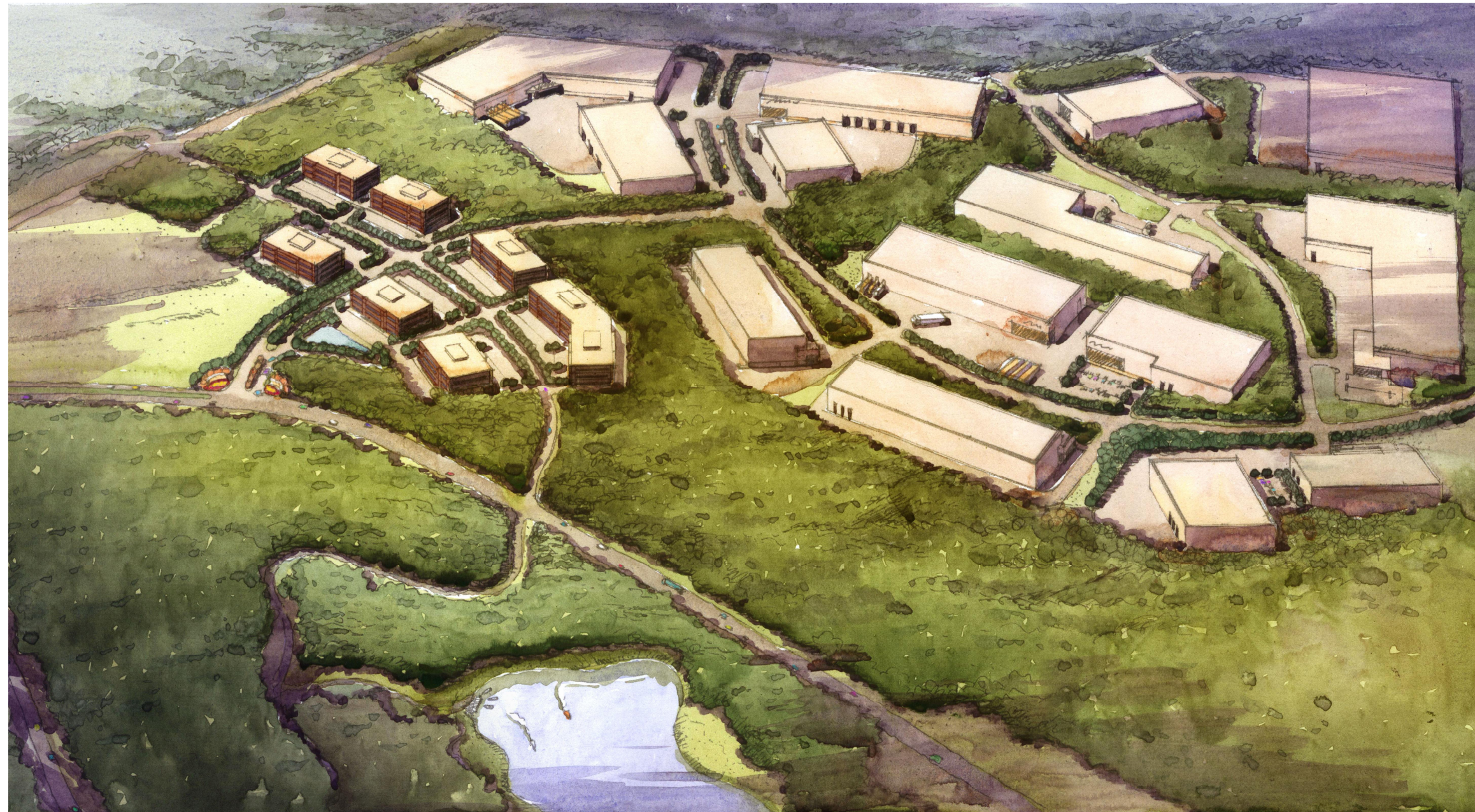
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This drawing illustrates the business center and industrial center component of the master plan. These uses work with the environmental features on the site, incorporating into the natural landscape. Uses are well buffered from each other and from view along US 521, protecting the aesthetic quality of the corridor.

Additionally, large stands of mature trees and scenic view sheds from Andrew Jackson State Park are protected.

Employment Center (D)
Perspective Rendering



Conservation Based Subdivision (D)
Perspective Rendering

This drawing illustrates the conservation subdivision design component of the master plan. High end townhomes and condos overlook an equestrian center, promoting one of prominent pastimes of area residents.

Neighborhood serving retail is provided at a small scale so residents do not have to get in their cars and travel on US 521 to get goods needed on a daily basis.

Riverside Development (E)

The Riverside Development site is an approximately 1,550 acre site west of US 521 opposite Porter Ranch Road and Old Hickory Road and adjacent to the Landsford Canal State Park and Catawba River. The site is currently zoned I-2 and contains some obsolete industrial uses, but the rezoning of the area just north of the site to allow for the construction of a residential subdivision has caused the County to reevaluate the site's future use. Characteristics of the site make it appealing to both residential and employment uses. Residents are attracted to the views, natural amenities, and rural nature of the area. The site is also suited to employment uses because of its proximity to rail, SC highways 5 and 9, and a hydroelectric power source in the river. Although utilities are currently not available, they could easily be extended in the future. For these reasons, the site was selected to demonstrate how both uses - an employment center and large lot residential development - could co-exist on the site.

The employment portion of the site includes an employment center and office park that accommodate flex employment and office employment respectively. The residential portion of the site includes a large lot residential development with a riverfront amenity area, and riverfront greenway.



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This drawing illustrates the portion of the master plan along the Catawba River. The riverfront greenway allows access to the river to all neighborhood residents, not just those with riverfront properties. The riverfront amenity area also ensures that the river can be enjoyed by all County residents.

Riverside Development (E)
Perspective Rendering

Airport Employment Center (F)

Members of the consultant team, PAC, Economic Development Commission, and general public are in agreement that the area around McWhirter Field Airport should be industrial in nature because of its proximity to the airport, rail, SC 9, and the availability of utilities. This site was chosen because the study area is in need of additional employment sites and it afforded the opportunity to demonstrate a viable location for a business park.

The site is approximately 950 acres in size and includes the area between the airport and SC 9 and the area east of the airport to Riverside Road. This site plan is compatible with the new airport overlay district. Some businesses could directly benefit from proximity to the airport, where hangers could taxi directly onto the runway. But existing rail line, proximity to SC 9, and available utilities make it a viable employment center for a variety of industries. Plans include a service road that runs throughout the Employment Center, with the ability to connect the road to a potential employment expansion area north of the airport.

The development plan includes a mix of flex employment and office employment.



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Airport Employment Center (F)
Perspective Rendering

This drawing illustrates the layout of the business park. Office uses are in proximity to US 521 and SC 9, while large employment centers benefit from proximity and access to the airport.

