



**What Design Districts do:**

*Ensure fundamental site design and age-tested town design principles.*

*Include the fundamental principles of sound infrastructure and multi-modal transportation planning.*

*Promote natural and historic resource preservation.*

*Respond to citizen preferences and public demands for more choice.*

*Acknowledge fiscal limitations and the need for enhanced efficiency.*

**What Design Districts do NOT do:**

*Do not prescribe specific land uses.*

*Do not replace the Zoning Map.*

*Do not limit the development rights of private property owners.*

*Do not limit growth, economic growth, or consumer choice.*

Throughout the public participation process associated with the work of CPUC1, Knightdale residents expressed concern about the general quality and design of the built environment. These citizens asked for a comprehensive plan that promotes best practices in urban design, enhances the local quality of life in terms of both aesthetics and functional utility, maintains the historic and rural character of Knightdale, and raises the level of community expectations for the built environment. Similar sentiments had been expressed before; however, the ideas had yet to be integrated into the comprehensive planning process the way that these citizens had hoped.

The 1993 Comprehensive Plan relied on references to two (2) separate land use plans: "The Land Use Development Plan" and "The Land Use Design Plan". While the *Land Use Development Plan* identified the projected location and timing of development in five (5) year increments, the *Land Use Design Plan* attempted to manage the content and design of development by listing land uses allowed in each area of town. Since "development" was discussed in both plans, and "design" was not expressly discussed in either; the titles themselves often led town staff, elected officials and the public to confuse these plans. Other identified problems included:

- Developments often conflicted with the timing increments for development as provided on the *Land Use Development Plan*; and
- The *Land Use Design Plan* was being used to show which uses were allowed in each area of town; and
- The *Land Use Design Plan* often duplicated the Town's official zoning map.

CPUC1, Town Staff and the consultants suggested that a different type of map that was more useful and user friendly would be helpful. Their discussions led to the concept of "design districts" in which land uses are determined by the zoning map while the design, layout and form of those uses are influenced by the 2027 Comprehensive Plan's new Design District Master Plan and its associated guidelines. Therefore, the Design District Master Plan does not prescribe specific land uses for each area of town as the previous *Land Use Design Plan* did. CPUC2 built upon the initial Design District Master Plan by adjusting the design objectives based on the progress and lessons learned in the intervening years, refining and enhancing the overall concepts associated with each design district and introducing the concept of design overlays that bring about additional guidelines for specific areas of interest.



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## II. DESIGN GUIDELINES

Through public participation and professional input, a series of design guidelines have been developed for both the general area and each specific district. The intent of the guidelines is to provide the framework in which development proposals mold themselves to reflect the Town's character and community aspirations, and to encourage a developer's creativity in providing solutions. Furthermore, these guidelines assist the Town in developing and revising the desired standards and rules found within the Unified Development Ordinance. Altogether, the influence of these design guidelines will extend throughout Knightdale whether the desire is to retain the rural setting, modify the emerging and existing urban patterns or significantly change the character of a particular area.

The purposes of the design guidelines may also be expressed as follows:

- To educate property owners about the design characteristics of the town;
- To preserve the integrity of the community's rural historic resources and promote compatible new construction;
- To frame an approach to design that will help sustain the character of the community that appeals to residents and visitors;
- To provide information that property owners may use in making decisions about their buildings by addressing basic principles of design;
- To maintain cohesive neighborhood identities that respect the unique natural setting of Knightdale; and
- To be implemented throughout the Town of Knightdale and its ultimate planning area.

Once carried through to the Unified Development Ordinance, the design guidelines will have helped to form the backbone of a re-vamped development plan review system involving Town Staff, Town Boards, the development community and the public. The review system will focus on items such as:

- building orientation;
- scale and mass;
- materials;
- architectural features;
- landscaping;
- lighting;
- open space and recreation;

- 
- parking;
  - streets and public infrastructure; and
  - overall treatment of the site, such as preservation of existing vegetation and grading.

Consequently, these guidelines will have a further indirect influence on developers, engineers, architects, and other design professionals involved in the planning and design of development plans; as well as elected officials and board members involved in the recommendations and decisions concerning those plans.



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### III. OVERALL DESIGN DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

A set of objectives are developed to guide development in Knightdale:

1. Promote a built environment that blends vernacular form with efficient function;
2. Preserve the natural environment and encourage conscientious development in regards to it;
3. Create a supportive community image and identity that local businesses may tap into and partner in;
4. Enhance the 'sense of place' and preserve the local character of Knightdale;
5. Promote the development of a vibrant, sustainable and safe community design in which people desire to live, work and visit;
6. Promote the development of a cohesive community network of readily-identifiable social, cultural and recreational gathering spaces;
7. Promote a compact mix of uses in areas around Knightdale, including Old Town, that reflect and build upon the Town's character;
8. Promote a variety of land uses which are compatible to one another and provide a vibrant and varied local economy, which will attract and support a wide diversity of business opportunities and community services; and
9. Promote site design which clearly provides a system of coordinated land uses and that encourages decision makers, the development community and town staff to view each new development proposal in a larger and regional context.

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## **IV. OVERALL DESIGN GUIDELINES**

The overall design guidelines respond to a number of guiding principles that were identified through the plan creation process. This series of guidelines seek to embrace development and expand upon opportunities that exist due to the location, natural environment and character of Knightdale. It is crucial to remember that while these guidelines generally apply to all areas of Knightdale, there is also a series of district-specific guidelines that requires a more specific approach that further enhances the qualities of each Design District.

The overall community design of Knightdale should adhere to the following guidelines:

- OA-1. Historic buildings, features and landscapes should be preserved wherever possible.
- OA-2. Architecture and landscape design should be derived from local vernacular, climate, culture and history.
- OA-3. Individual architectural projects should be linked to their surroundings through common elements and features.
- OA-4. Significant open and rural spaces should be protected and preserved wherever possible.
- OA-5. Civic buildings and public gathering places should be located in prominent locations.
- OA-6. Concentrations of civic, institutional, and commercial activity should be embedded as integral components of neighborhoods and design districts.
- OA-7. Automobile accommodation areas and travel ways should respect pedestrian travel ways and the form of public spaces.
- OA-8. Commercial development should exhibit a strong and vibrant architectural treatment of their building facades and provide signature public amenities.
- OA-9. Residential development should provide a variety of significant passive and active recreational amenities.
- OA-10. Development proposals should incorporate best practices for creating public spaces that are safe.



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OA-11. Pedestrian travel should be comprehensively planned to accommodate substantial on-site pedestrian activities as well as movement within and through the site.

OA-12. Development proposals should minimize energy and water use, waste and pollution.

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## **V. DESIGN DISTRICT DEFINITIONS**

The Town of Knightdale set a goal to be a community where both town (urban) and country (rural) areas coexist in the midst of the rapidly growing Triangle region. To achieve this goal, the 2027 Comprehensive Plan outlines a series of design districts located on the Design District Plan (Figure 5.2). The design districts indicate the functional form of growth within the different areas of town, and they are a direct response to input from both Comprehensive Plan Update committees and the public at large. The five (5) design districts are listed as follows:

1. Countryside District
2. Neighborhood District
3. Urban Village District
4. Highway District
5. Special Use District

In addition to the five (5) primary design districts, there is a single design district overlay known as the Gateway Design District Overlay. As part of the 2010 mini-update process, the Gateway Design District Overlay was created by the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee to indicate areas where the Town should seek to enhance its “sense of place” and local character by working with property owners and developers to incorporate gateway design elements into the landscape.

Each of these districts are more specifically discussed in the following pages.

# DESIGN DISTRICT PLAN



Town of Knightdale  
Planning Department  
2010

## Legend

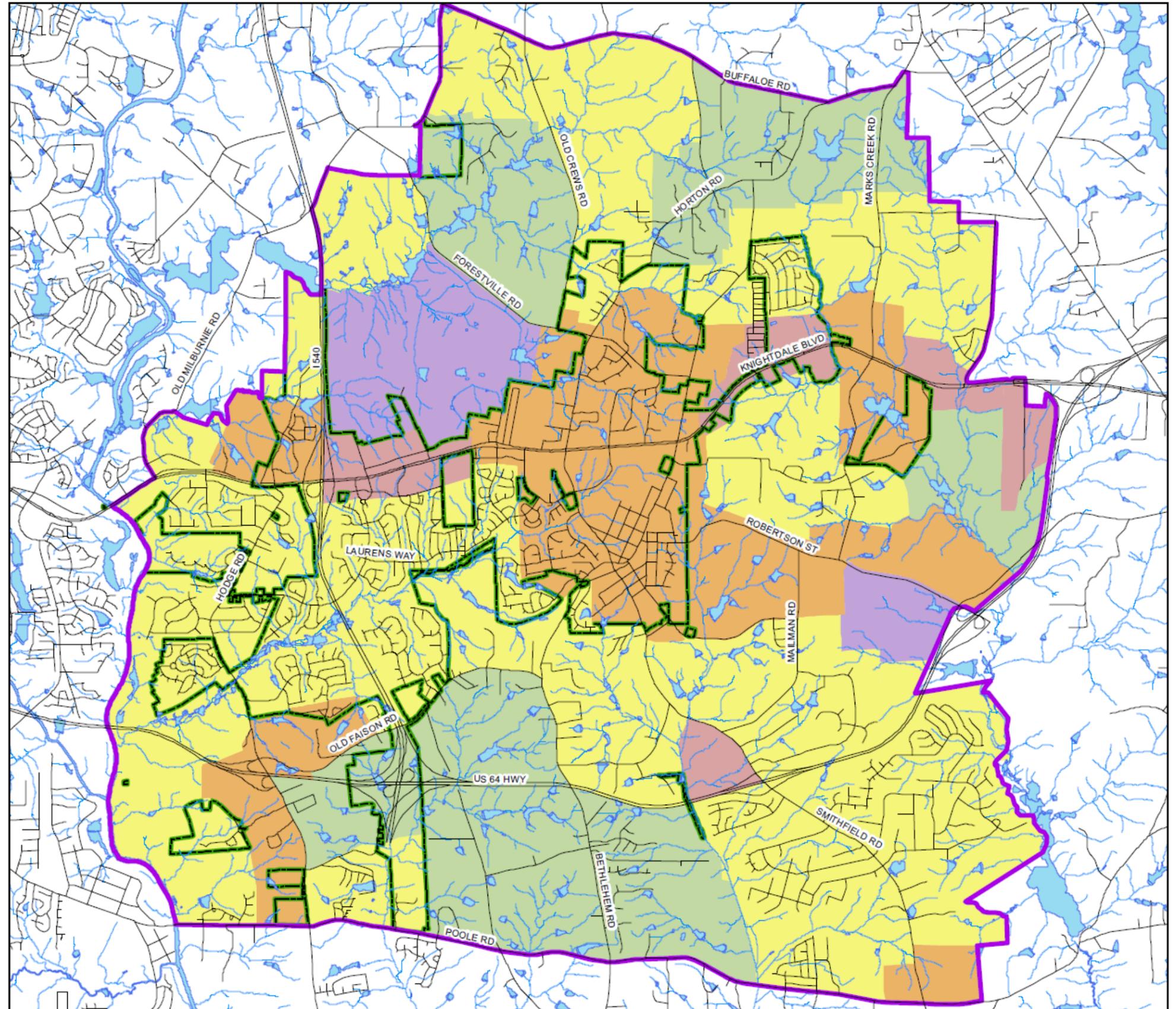
-  Streets
-  Urban Service Area Boundary
-  Surface Waters
-  Surface Streams
-  Knightdale Corporate Limits (2009)
- Design Districts**
-  Countryside Design
-  Neighborhood Design
-  Urban Village Design
-  Highway Design
-  Special Use Design



1 inch = 3,400 feet



## FIGURE 5.2



# ACTIVITY CENTER PLAN



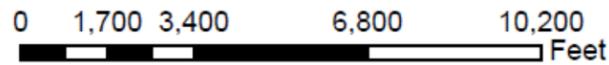
Town of Knightdale  
Planning Department  
2010

## Legend

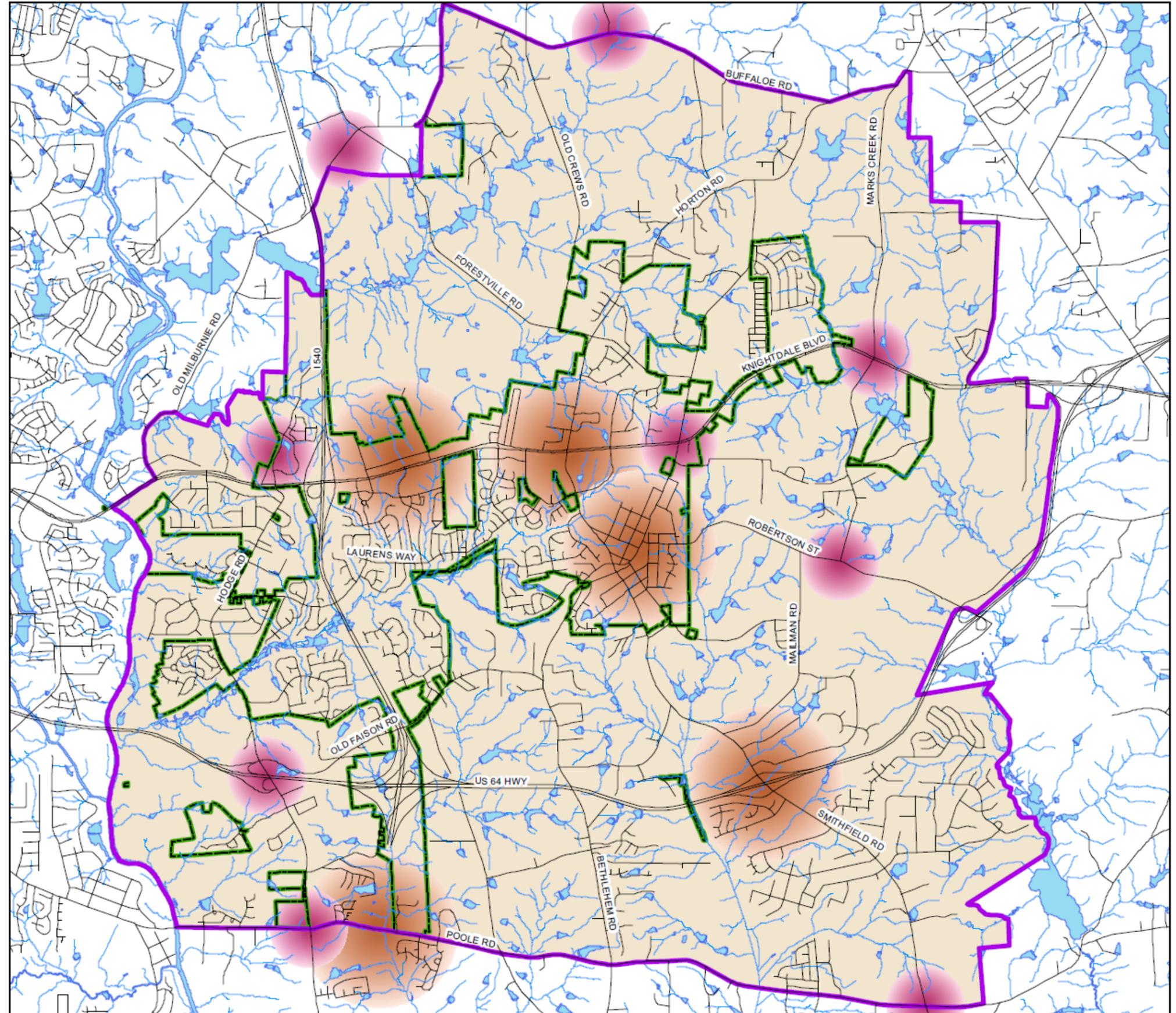
- Streets
- Urban Service Area Boundary
- Surface Waters
- Surface Streams
- Knightdale Corporate Limits (2009)
- Secondary Activity Center (1/4 Mile Radius)
- Primary Activity Center (1/2 Mile Radius)



1 inch = 3,400 feet



## FIGURE 5.3





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## A. COUNTRYSIDE DESIGN DISTRICT

### 1. DEFINITION

The Countryside Design District encourages the development of compact neighborhoods and rural compounds that set aside significant natural vistas and landscape features, such as family farms, for permanent conservation. Types of development associated with the Countryside Design District include traditional farms, the single house, the farmhouse cluster, the residential neighborhood, and traditional neighborhood developments which are also known as “TNDs”. In addition to private farmlands which contribute to the conservation of open space; the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan also shows the general areas in which the Town is looking to conserve significant tracts of land as open space and parks for the enjoyment and education of future generations.

A “Countryside Village” is a cluster of buildings within the Countryside Design District that provides for the location of shops, services, small workplaces, civic and residential buildings central to a neighborhood (or grouping of neighborhoods), and within walking distance of dwellings. A Countryside Village should exhibit an interconnected pattern of streets, safe and convenient pedestrian access and an overall size that is limited to approximately ¼ mile in radius. Building forms in the Countryside Village should be compatible with those of surrounding neighborhoods and should respect the rural landscape, and the uses within them should have a primary market area that consists of the surrounding Countryside Design District. While the Design District Master Plan does not show the general location of these “villages” within the larger Countryside Design District, the accompanying Activity Center Map (Figure 5.3) provides direction as to where these villages are encouraged.



## 2. GUIDELINES

- CS-1. Significant natural vistas and landscape features shall be preserved and/or conserved.
- CS-2. Rural road design that features ribbon pavement, open swales and walking paths is encouraged outside of Countryside Villages.
- CS-3. The design of streets, pedestrian paths, greenways and bicycle facilities should minimize conflicts and promote connectivity.
- CS-4. Riparian corridors (stream buffers) are to be preserved and utilized as community open space features.
- CS-5. In countryside neighborhoods, subdivisions and streets should run parallel to riparian corridors wherever possible, so that individual lots face the corridor across the street, creating a “parkway” style public space.
- CS-6. Design should primarily encourage and support residential and agricultural uses.
- CS-7. Where appropriate, design that accommodates commercial and industrial uses should more strongly emphasize enhancement of the environment and open space conservation.
- CS-8. Adjacent buildings should be architecturally compatible through similar silhouettes, spacing between facades, setbacks, proportions, treatments, exterior materials, scale, massing, and/or architectural style.



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## **B. NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DISTRICT**

### **1. DEFINITION**

The Neighborhood Design District primarily provides for suburban residential development surrounding the original town center and higher-density urban villages. Streets and housing will be arranged to highlight significant natural features as envisioned, for example, by Frederick Law Olmsted's Master Plan for Riverside, IL; the original plans for Myer's Park in Charlotte, NC; or the original plans for Cameron Park in neighboring Raleigh. Furthermore, streets in the Neighborhood Design District should be interconnected, unless prevented by environmental constraints. A wide array of housing types is encouraged, and low-intensity business activity is permitted in mixed-use buildings constructed at a residential scale in accordance with location criteria. Specific building types within this design district should correspond to the intensity of the uses permitted.

The "Neighborhood Village" is a cluster of buildings within the Neighborhood Design District that provides for the location of shops, services, small workplaces, civic and residential buildings central to a neighborhood (or grouping of neighborhoods) all within walking distance of residential dwellings. A Neighborhood Village shall be developed with an interconnected pattern of streets, safe and convenient pedestrian access, and an overall size that is limited to approximately ¼ mile in radius. Building forms in the Neighborhood Village should be compatible with those of surrounding neighborhoods, and the uses within them should have a primary market area of one (1) or two (2) miles. The integration of adjoining natural features is secondary within Neighborhood Villages and should not interfere with the development of a compact center. If a Neighborhood Village is the focus of a planned transit stop, it should be designed to serve the neighborhood's residential base plus transit riders.

While the Design District Master Plan does not show the general location of these "villages" within the larger Neighborhood Design District, the accompanying Activity Center Map (Figure 5.3) provides direction as to where these villages are encouraged.

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## 2. GUIDELINES

- NH-1. Pedestrian scale of design should be utilized throughout any development with sidewalks generally on both sides of the street, particularly within walking distance of greenways, activity centers and other pedestrian destinations.
- NH-2. Streets should be safe, comfortable and interesting to pedestrians through the use of approved landscaping, street tree buffers, street furniture and traffic calming devices.
- NH-3. In areas of low street connectivity, separate multi-use paths should be used to promote convenient bike and pedestrian access between neighborhoods.
- NH-4. Riparian corridors (stream buffers) are to be preserved and utilized as community open space features.
- NH-5. In neighborhoods, subdivisions and streets should run parallel to riparian corridors wherever possible, so that individual lots face the corridor across the street, creating a “parkway” style public space.
- NH-6. Where permitted, civic, professional, and retail uses should be constructed at a pedestrian scale and designed to accommodate all modes of transportation.
- NH-7. Residential garage doors should not dominate the front plane of a residence, but should be set back from the front plane of the house or be detached and located at the rear of the main residential structure.
- NH-8. On-street parking should be an integral component of parking plans within any Neighborhood Village.
- NH-9. The front elevations of non-residential buildings should line the street and their overall massing should be pedestrian in scale.
- NH-10. Adjacent buildings should exhibit general architectural compatibility through the use of similar silhouettes, spacing between facades, setbacks, proportions, treatments, exterior materials, scale, massing, and/or architectural style.



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- NH-11. Within Neighborhood Design Districts, a broad range of housing types and price points should be promoted as a method to increase the likelihood of bringing people of diverse backgrounds into daily interaction, and thereby strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to building an authentic community.
  - NH-12. Streets should be designed as interconnected networks that have the effect of promoting alternate means of transportation such as walking and cycling, as well as reducing the length of automobile trips; except when significant natural features or historic resources preclude interconnectivity.
  - NH-13. Civic, institutional, and commercial activity should be concentrated in Neighborhood Villages that are within walking distance of most residences within the Neighborhood Design District.
  - NH-14. Schools should be constructed as multi-story architectural centerpieces of the community and located to promote the option of families and children walking or cycling to school.
  - NH-15. All Neighborhood Villages should contain mixed uses (horizontally or vertically) including, but not limited to, single family and multi-family dwellings, office buildings, retail storefronts, live-work units, and multi-story housing with ground level retail/office uses.
  - NH-16. A central component of any Neighborhood Village is the provision of a square, plaza or other open space that promotes community interaction and enhances the aesthetic value of the surrounding neighborhoods.
  - NH-17. Neighborhoods should include pocket parks and community playgrounds as communal outdoor living spaces where neighbors may meet and interact as small groups.

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## **C. URBAN VILLAGE DESIGN DISTRICT**

### **1. DEFINITION**

The Urban Village Design District provides for revitalization, reuse, and infill development in Knightdale's original town center, as well as development within other areas identified for higher-density living alongside higher-intensity uses. Consequently, a broad array of uses are expected in a mixed-use pattern which integrates shops, restaurants, services, work places; civic, educational and religious facilities, and higher density housing in a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment. An Urban Village's market area includes both the surrounding residential neighborhoods and the broader community. The district is also intended to accommodate the higher overall intensity of development required to support a proposed regional multi-modal transit hub. Activity Centers within the Urban Village Design District should be sized approximately with a ½ mile radius to ensure enough space to meet the District's expected local and community-wide demand for facilities and services.

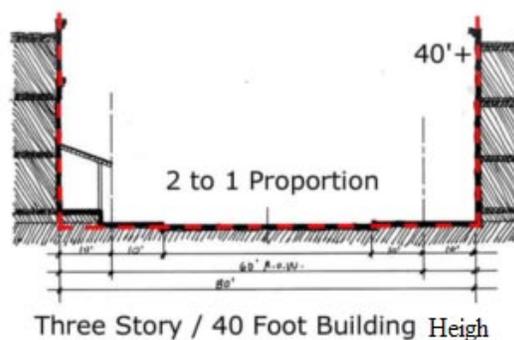
### **2. GUIDELINES**

- UV-1. Pedestrian-friendly streets should be utilized throughout any development within the district with sidewalks on both sides of the street.
- UV-2. Urban Village Design Districts should contain mixed-uses (horizontally or vertically) that includes, but is not limited to, single family and multi-family dwellings, office buildings, retail storefronts, live-work units, and multi-story housing with ground level retail/office uses.
- UV-3. A central component of any development within the Urban Village Design District is the provision of squares, plazas or other open spaces that promote community interaction and enhance the aesthetic value of the town.
- UV-4. Urban Village block lengths generally should not exceed 660 feet.
- UV-5. Mid block drives and rear alleys should be utilized for access to parking, utilities, service and loading areas to minimize the number of driveway cuts along streets; thereby minimizing pedestrian conflicts.



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- UV-6. Uses associated with daily living (civic, professional and retail) should be constructed within walking distance of residential uses and transit stops, allowing for the option of independence from the automobile.
  - UV-7. Streets should be designed as interconnected networks that have the effect of promoting alternate means of transportation such as walking and cycling, as well as reducing the length of automobile trips; except when significant natural features or historic resources preclude interconnectivity.
  - UV-8. On-street parking should be an integral component of parking plans within the Urban Village Design District.
  - UV-9. Transit corridors should be planned to service and help maintain the viability of the Urban Village Design Districts.
  - UV-10. Residential garage doors should not dominate the front plane of a residence, but should be set back from the front plane of the house or be detached and located at the rear of the main residential structure.
  - UV-11. Streets should be safe, comfortable and interesting to pedestrians through the use of approved landscaping, street tree buffers, street furniture and traffic calming devices.
  - UV-12. Buildings should be located in close proximity to the pedestrian portion of the street, with off-street parking located behind and/or beside the buildings.
  - UV-13. The front elevations of commercial buildings should line the street and their overall massing should be pedestrian in scale.
  - UV-14. Adjacent buildings should exhibit general architectural compatibility through the use of similar silhouettes, spacing between facades, setbacks, proportions, treatments, exterior materials, scale, massing, and/or architectural style.
  - UV-15. Canopies and awnings should be canvas or similar material and should be permitted to encroach over a sidewalk to within two (2) feet of the face of a street curb with any illumination provided by external lighting only.

- UV-16. Ground mounted mechanical equipment should be located in the rear or side yard and screened from off-site view, while roof-mounted mechanical equipment should be screened from off-site view by a parapet wall or similar architectural feature.
- UV-17. Loading and service delivery areas should be located in the rear or side yard away from the street frontage.
- UV-18. Street edges should be framed by building facades and other architectural elements including street trees and formal landscaping.
- UV-19. Building articulation such as porches, balconies, and bay windows should be used along street edges to promote the visual transition from public to private space.
- UV-20. Streets lined with retail uses should be designed with as tight a height-to-width ratio (as shown below) as permitted to achieve a spatial definition and sense of place necessary to compete with other retail shopping areas.





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## D. HIGHWAY DESIGN DISTRICT

### 1. DEFINITION

The Highway Design District is established to provide primarily for auto-dependent uses in areas not amenable to easy pedestrian access nor a comfortable pedestrian environment. It is the intent of the Highway Design District to serve not only the Knightdale community, but interstate travelers using Interstate 540 and US Highway 64/264 as well. Because of the scale and access requirements of uses in this category, they often cannot be compatibly integrated within the Urban Village or Neighborhood design districts. Development at the edges of the Highway Design District must provide a compatible transition to uses in adjacent districts, while arterials and collectors should be lined with formal street tree plantings.

### 2. GUIDELINES

- HW-1. All retail structures should be constructed with materials reflective of the local architectural vernacular—particularly stone, for which the area is known.
- HW-2. All facades of a building that are visible from streets and public parking areas should contribute to the aesthetics of the district and reflect a human scale and characteristics similar to the façade containing the primary customer entrance.
- HW-3. Facades that are visible from streets and public parking areas should incorporate recesses and projections and other articulations such as windows, awnings and arcades in order to avoid having an uninterrupted length along the façade in excess of 20 horizontal feet.
- HW-4. A well-marked network of pedestrian ways including paths, sidewalks and crosswalks should be designed to provide pedestrian connections between buildings and from parking areas to building entrances.
- HW-5. Smaller retail stores that are part of a larger principal building should have their own display windows and separate outside entrances.
- HW-6. Off-street parking areas within the district should be located in the side or rear yard.

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- HW-7. Where feasible, on-street parking should be incorporated as an element into overall parking plans, particularly where smaller retail stores exist.
  - HW-8. Adjacent buildings should exhibit general architectural compatibility through the use of similar silhouettes, spacing between facades, setbacks, proportions, treatments, exterior materials, scale, massing, and/or architectural style.
  - HW-9. Ground mounted mechanical equipment should be located in the rear or side yard and screened from off-site view, while roof-mounted mechanical equipment should be screened from off-site view (particularly from adjacent streets and other public areas) by a parapet wall or similar architectural feature.
  - HW-10. Loading and service delivery areas should be located in the rear or side yard away from the street frontage.



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## **E. SPECIAL USE DESIGN DISTRICT**

### **1. DEFINITION**

The Special Use District is established to accommodate uses that may constitute health or safety hazards, have greater than average impacts on the environment or diminish the use and enjoyment of nearby property by generating noise, smoke, fumes, odors, glare, commercial vehicle traffic or similar nuisances. Because uses permitted in the Special Use Design District vary as to their impacts on the community, they may likewise vary as to effective mitigating conditions.

### **2. GUIDELINES**

- SU-1. A natural or vegetated buffer commensurate in size (width) with the intensity of the specific nuisance should be imposed along the perimeter of sites within the Special Use Design District.
- SU-2. Structures and uses within the Special Use Design District should be screened from off-site view along any public street.

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## **F. GATEWAY DESIGN DISTRICT OVERLAY**

### **1. DEFINITION**

The Gateway Design District Overlays are defined, limited areas along the perimeter of the town that incorporate monuments, other structures, and views—where possible—to mark the boundaries (Figure 5.4). Furthermore they give the first impression of the town; something built through which they may learn more than just the name of the place, but also something about its character. They also welcome people to an area through unique, attractive methods that draw people in and encourage them to stay and explore.

### **2. GUIDELINES**

GW-1. All land within the Gateway Target Area shall be considered by land owners, developers and the Town for installation of possible gateway elements.

GW-2. Land within the Gateway Target Area closest to the Gateway Target Point shall be the most highly considered by land owners, developers and the Town for the installation of gateway elements.

GW-3. Developments identified for incorporating gateway elements should make use of the following:

- A graphic symbol of the Town;
- A short message;
- Banners;
- Monument Signs; and
- Landscaping.

GW-4. Elements that are part of the gateway must exhibit the following characteristics:

- Uniqueness;
- Natural materials such as stone or wood;
- Simplicity;
- Color;
- Scalable to various locations; and
- Replicable.

# GATEWAY DESIGN DISTRICT OVERLAY



Town of Knightdale  
Planning Department  
2010

## Legend

### Gateway Target Areas

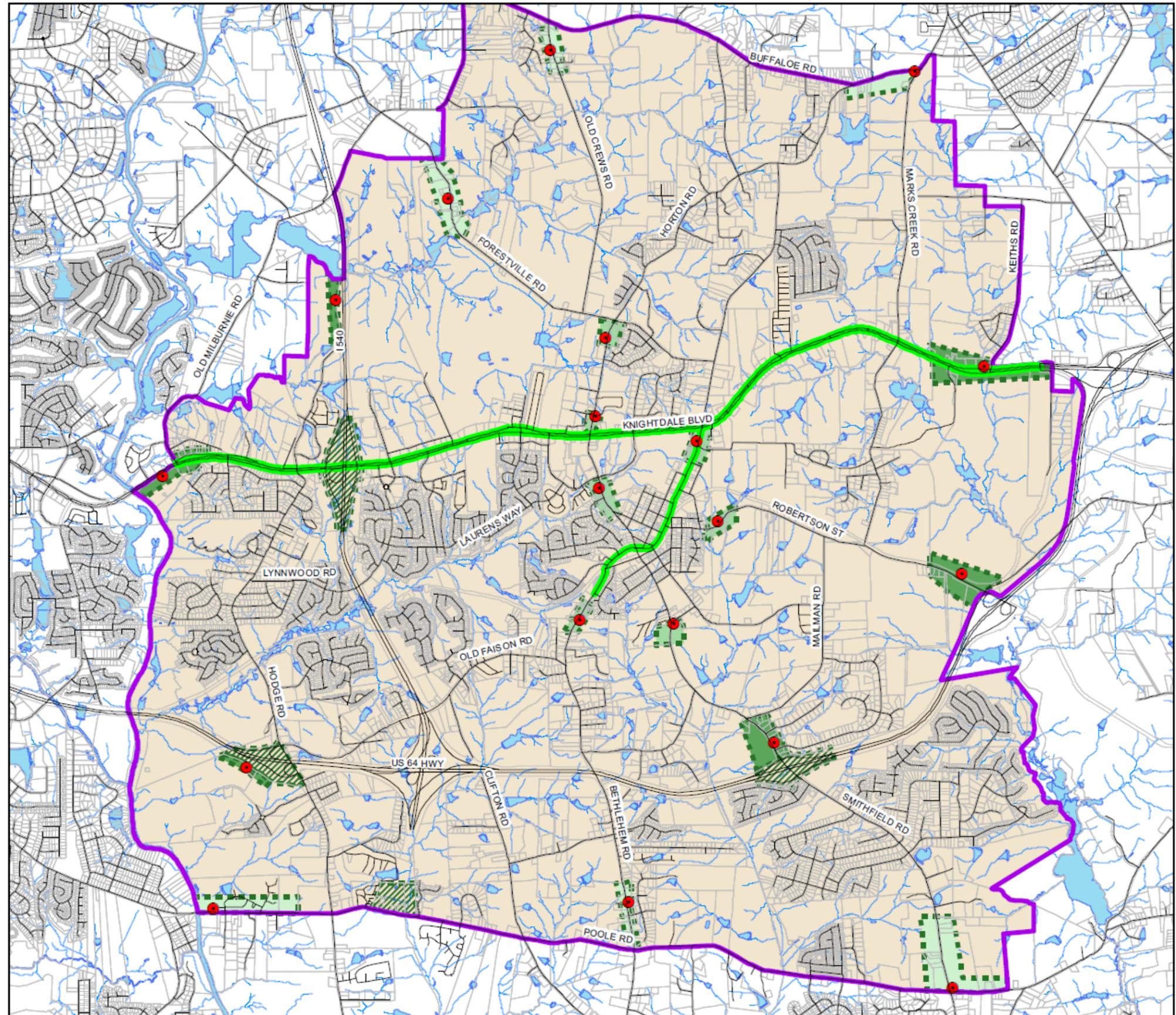
- Public Landscaping Improvements
- Priority 1 Gateway Target Area
- Priority 2 Gateway Target Area
- Priority 3 Gateway Target Area
- Primary Target Point
- Public Streetscape Enhancements
- Streets
- Urban Service Area Boundary
- Knightdale Corporate Limits (2009)
- Parcels
- Surface Waters
- Surface Streams



1 inch = 3,400 feet



## FIGURE 5.4







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## VI. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE 2027 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ON GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

With thoughtful implementation, the design districts will help the community meet many of the stated goals of a "functional framework". These districts may also help Knightdale develop a strong economy based on a highly aesthetic and functional infrastructure that provides high-paying jobs, a strong tax base and a variety of housing options (i.e. affordable vs. up-scale locations, amenities and design; high- vs. low-density construction; rural, suburban, or urban environments).

The design districts are not meant to be restrictive, by disallowing specific uses. Rather, they are meant to allow for a variety of uses that must conform to design standards established by the community. Design Districts will not hinder Knightdale's competitiveness for attracting new developments as single-family housing, apartments, retail centers, office parks, and industrial uses are all allowed in Knightdale. However, these uses will be asked to forego some of their corporate architecture and design in order to meet community-based design standards developed in conjunction with local residents, businesses, landowners, professional planners, urban designers and developers. The fact that most uses will be allowed in any design district, as long as they adhere to the design standards of that district, may allow for a broader range of businesses and housing types than were allowed under the previous UDO.

Specifically, the Countryside and Neighborhood design districts will have the highest potential for attracting residential development. Retail, office, and industrial uses will only be permitted as long as they do not violate the basic tenets of the district (i.e. land conservation, preservation of natural views, and development of traditional neighborhoods). Meanwhile, the Urban Village Design District is ideal for attracting a variety of higher density housing, retail, and office developments. These uses, however, will need to be located and designed to maximize synergy and minimize negative impacts that the individual uses might otherwise have on each other. From a market perspective, the Highway Design Districts are ideal locations for big box and large retail development. The locations of these districts in the plan also adhere to the basic market principles of superior highway access and visibility, and they should prove to be strong contributors to local employment and the Town's tax base. Finally, the Special Use Design Districts are set aside for existing uses that would generate undesirable impacts on their surroundings, and they generally incorporate enough area to effectively buffer them from neighboring development.



Non-prototypical commercial and mixed-use developments (those that do not rely on corporate architecture) can have a higher rate of success as long as they focus on important market fundamentals. The placement and design of these centers must be mindful of market fundamentals regarding access, visibility, parking availability, competitive location and tenant mix. The most successful non-prototypical developments create an inviting sense of place that transforms the center into an attractive destination that draws people from a wider market area; thereby leading to increased spending at the local business establishments. This is especially true in metropolitan areas like the Triangle that have limited numbers of unique, or differentiated retail destinations.

Increased convenience and pedestrian connectivity also encourage consumers to browse multiple stores and increase the amount of time shoppers spend on shopping, dining and being entertained. Almost all of the national retailers have developed prototypes that fit the types of non-prototypical development designs adopted in this plan.

Some residents may be discouraged by the externalities often associated with development - primarily congestion. Without thoughtful planning and implementation, the market conditions that will initially make Knightdale attractive to retailers, businesses and new residents will, over time, lead to negative externalities that will ultimately discourage additional business formation, employment growth and household formation. Congestion will erode the community's standard of living by lengthening travel times, increasing air, water, soil pollution, and creating visual blight that will be more costly to address in a reactive versus proactive manner. Many of the action items included in this plan will assist the Town in proactively combating congestion and other negative externalities.



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## VII. LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN ACTION ITEMS

The Action Items are provided to direct the implementation strategies related to land use and community design in Knightdale and are in accordance with the overall goals of the 2027 Comprehensive Plan, the objectives of the Design District Master Plan and the previously listed design guidelines.

### ACTION ITEMS:

The following are the tasks which provide a course of action to implement the objectives for land use and community design:

- DS-1 The Town shall amend the UDO to permit both horizontal and vertical mixed-use developments and master planned developments.
- DS-2 The Town shall amend the UDO to allow for varying densities and density credits within mixed-use, planned unit and master planned communities and to provide design standards for residential development.
- DS-3 The Town shall work with adjacent municipalities (Raleigh and Wendell) and Wake County to coordinate land use planning efforts to ensure compatible community design along Knightdale's periphery.
- DS-4 The Town shall review and amend its design standards within the UDO to ensure that they:
  - protect and enhance the quality of the Town's built and natural environments; and
  - promote the small town and rural character of Knightdale.
- DS-5 The Town shall continue to work with private developers in creating community spaces by encouraging pedestrian scale developments that include gathering areas. Gathering areas may include benches, fountains, shade trees, or picnic tables. Residential sites shall be integrated with, and strongly linked to, abutting residential areas allowing residents to safely access the site by car, bicycle or foot. To the extent possible, public spaces such as churches, schools, libraries and parks shall be physically linked to community spaces.

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- DS-6 The Town shall comprehensively review its streetscape design, which includes a planting area and sidewalk program that will result in tree lined streets that provide a shady area for drivers and a buffer from auto traffic for pedestrians.
  - DS-7 The Town shall adopt and review a connectivity index requirement that results in links between neighborhoods that do not necessitate travel along arterials.
  - DS-8 The Town shall amend the UDO to streamline the major residential subdivision approval process by codifying Council expectations and setting standards that may be administratively reviewed.
  - DS-9 The Town shall adopt residential street design standards that accommodate the needs of pedestrians.
  - DS-10 The Town shall pursue and dedicate funding for the provision of public plazas, parks and greenways.
  - DS-11 The Town shall review and amend the UDO to ensure that developers are contributing to the construction of public recreation and gathering spaces through open space dedication and improvement requirements.
  - DS-12 The Town shall research crime prevention through environmental design and incorporate appropriate design guidelines into the UDO that ensure a safer community.
  - DS-13 The Town shall prepare and implement a Small Area Plan that addresses the issues of appearance, economic development, neighborhood conservation and revitalization in the original town center ("Old Town").
  - DS-14 The Town shall prepare and implement a Small Area Plan that addresses the development of a multi-modal transit hub along the eastern reaches of Knightdale's rail corridor.
  - DS-15 The Town shall adopt a minimum housing ordinance that requires decent, safe and sanitary housing for all Knightdale citizens.
  - DS-16 The Town shall request that the Wake County Housing and Community Revitalization Committee allocate state and federal housing funds to



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programs that will address the development needs of Knightdale, including home rehabilitation programs.

DS-17 The Town shall examine and revise, as necessary, the standards required for land use and design issues along US Highway 64/264 and I-540.

