

# VIENNA BUSINESS DISTRICT SMALL AREA PLAN REPORT

## SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

### What is the Vienna Business Small Area Plan

The Vienna Small Area Plan (VSAP) is a conceptual plan for approximately 140 acres in the northern portion of Lewisville's planning area. The proposed district and plan encompasses that area surrounding the intersection of two very important thoroughfares in this rural community, Yadkinville Road and Lewisville-Vienna Road. It is a policy document which establishes the Town's official long-range vision and recommendations for future land uses, transportation, parks, open space, and the environment in that area. The Vienna Small Area Plan provides guidelines to preserve the context and setting of the district, so that this unique place will retain its distinction as a community focal point. The plan will also update that portion of the Town's 2005 Land Use Plan Update for the Vienna area and compliment the existing Forsyth Legacy plan.

The plan contains guidelines and recommendations to help the Planning Board, Town Council, community leaders and residents make decisions on zoning, public investment and private initiatives. While the Area Plan process seeks the extensive involvement on the part of citizens, property owners and investors, the Planning Board has the responsibility to see that each Area Plan is consistent with the broad public interest and with the elements of the Lewisville Comprehensive Plan.



A view of the current business district along Yadkinville Road

### The Area Plan Process

The Vienna Small Area Plan has been created over many months through the efforts of a fourteen (14) member citizens' steering committee comprised of a variety of stakeholders from the community. The committee sought to create a plan that will become a roadmap for the community's future development. The steering committee included a variety of people concerned about the future of the Vienna cross-roads area. This plan seeks to capitalize on the planning area's inherent advantages while also addressing its acknowledged shortcomings. Accomplishing these objectives will ensure the Vienna community remains a vibrant component of Lewisville and Forsyth County well into the future.



The bold green line defines the area to which commercial growth would be limited

### **The Vienna Small Area Plan as a Policy Document**

*The Vienna Small Area Plan itself does not change the zoning of property* and it is not a development proposal for a specific project. Rather, this plan is an official policy document used to guide future Town development regulations, development policies, public infrastructure improvements, and the Town's evaluations of future development proposals.

The plan also provides development guidance to landowners, citizens, and developers in the northern Vienna planning area. The guiding principles, vision statements, and objectives are based on citizen input and were formulated during the public involvement process. They are the foundation upon which the Vienna Small Area Plan has been developed.

The plan acknowledges the realistic expectations of landowners and the value of their land and applies only to those properties facing Yadkinville Road between Glenn Ferry Road and Needham Road. It represents the experience of those lessons learned from ongoing enforcement of the Lewisville Downtown Commercial District ordinances.

The plan consists of this document, exhibit maps and Vienna Business District (VBD) ordinance. This plan and ordinance addresses the overall vision including the plan's guiding principles, the overall design concepts, land uses, transportation (roads, pedestrian and bicycles), parks and

open space (parks and recreation and cultural facilities) and implementation recommendations and strategies to effectively implement the Plan.



Riverside Lawn and Garden – Yadkinville Road

### **Current Conditions Within the Planning Area**

The Vienna community has experienced steady growth over the last twenty years. Census information chronicles the growth and expansion of new residential subdivisions located near the historic Vienna cross-roads area. Identified trends indicate continued subdivision development associated with proposed transportation improvements and the potential for a new elementary school to be constructed in western Forsyth County. The Vienna Small Area Plan emphasizes the creation of a small compact business district to prevent standard ‘strip’ commercial development from occurring along Yadkinville Road. The Vienna community lies within the Yadkin River watershed basin. The existing rural Northwest area provides an effective ‘spatial buffer’ between the suburban development of Lewisville and the Yadkin River which is a ‘*run of river*’ water supply for communities in Forsyth, Davidson, Davie and Randolph counties.



Yadkin River



Large acreage tract within the Vienna Business District

Portions of this area contain soils that are poor in permeability. This factor and the lack of a public sewer system has kept non-urban development activity relatively low, since suitable locations for septic systems are more difficult to place in these areas.

The Vienna community remains predominately rural and sparsely developed containing land classified as farm, forest, vacant, or low to medium density residential.



Working horse farm in the Yadkin Valley

Rural homes and small farmsteads are the prevalent land use. Tobacco, soybeans, corn, small grains, equestrian activities and 'niche agriculture' operations such as pick-your-own strawberries and pumpkins are the primary farm uses in the area. Five major subdivisions and one manufactured home community have been approved by the City/County Planning Board since 1985.

## **The Public Involvement Process**

In September of 2005, the Lewisville Planning Board conducted several public meetings in the Vienna community to seek feedback from residents and landowners regarding land use issues. Citizen involvement was fundamental to the development of the Vienna Small Area Plan. Comments and suggestions were taken very seriously to foster better communication and greater citizen involvement in the planning process. This resulted in a true sense of ownership by those who participated.

A citizen stakeholders committee was formed that consisted of persons owning property along Yadkinville Road and the surrounding area. Two members of the Lewisville Planning Board representing the Vienna community were also appointed to assist the stakeholders group with their work. The first meeting of this group was in early October of 2005. Participants discussed numerous issues facing their rural community. This dialogue included discussion of different development proposals rumored to be taking place as well as discussion of potential impacts from the proposed Northern Beltway. The stakeholders committee met monthly at two local churches located within the boundary of the proposed business district. Lewisville Planning staff conducted a *visioning process* in the community. Staff facilitated this process to assist themselves and the steering committee in determining what the citizens wanted their community to be like at a specific point in the future. Once the vision was defined, goals, objectives, obstacles and opportunities toward reaching the vision were discussed. These discussions served as the basis for the next step in the process, the formulation of recommendations by both the steering committee and planning staff.



A group of residents from the Vienna area were the subcommittee working to create the plan

## **Transportation Priorities**

Representatives of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) were invited to participate in the process by presenting information to the committee regarding planned transportation improvement projects affecting Yadkinville Road and Lewisville-Vienna Road.

The data presented indicated that traffic counts for Yadkinville Road are increasing. Currently, Yadkinville Road (SR 1525) has an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) count of 7000+/- vehicles per day. Congestion at the intersection is worst during the peak hours of 6:30am to 8:30am and 4:30pm to 6:30pm. Accident information for the intersection did not meet current requirements to warrant additional signals or realignment at this time. However, the idea of placing a roundabout at this location was discussed and supported by members of the stakeholders group.



Aerial photo of a typical roundabout

Mr. J.P. Couch P.E., NCDOT Traffic Engineer, noted that there appeared to be enough room to locate a single-lane roundabout at this location. Both he and Robert McMath P.E. were supportive of a plan to construct a roundabout in place of the existing intersection. They recommended that any plan to widen Yadkinville Road (SR 1525) should include the roundabout option.

The Town of Lewisville is located within the jurisdiction of the Winston-Salem Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MPO is responsible for developing and directing the comprehensive transportation planning process carried out by the local, State and Federal governments in conformance with Federal laws and guidelines. As part of this function, the Winston-Salem MPO advises local governments on future transportation needs by analyzing existing data and trends to make predictions of future changes.

The MPO prepares the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) which is a seven (7) year program adopted by the MPO every other year. This program schedules State and Federal funding for transportation projects in the Winston-Salem MPO area. The funds are used for roadway, bridge, safety, public transportation, passenger rail, bicycle, pedestrian and enhancement projects. Several transportation projects are currently proposed for the Vienna area. Several are currently included in the MTIP but are unfunded. The others are proposed as future needs and have not been prioritized for inclusion in the MTIP program. R-2247 (Northern Beltway – Western Loop) is part of the 2006-2012 MTIP. This fourteen (14) mile section of four lane expressway will interchange with Yadkinville Road (SR 1525) approximately 1.5 miles east of the Vienna cross-roads.

Supplemental to this project is the proposed widening of Yadkinville Road to a three (3) lane urban thoroughfare. Roadway cross-section drawings have been prepared for this project. However, it is not currently funded or prioritized.



Bicyclist utilizing a dedicated bike lane

Allowances for bicyclist have been made as part of the design for the Yadkinville Road widening project. The travel lanes have been widened by two (2) feet to accommodate bicycles. This lane will be striped and labeled exclusively for their use. A similar widening project has been proposed for Lewisville-Vienna Road (SR 1308). This project maintains the current two-lane cross-section and adds two (2) feet to both lanes to facilitate bicyclist. Both Yadkinville Road and Lewisville-Vienna are designated as bike routes by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Winston-Salem Department of Transportation.



Numerous bike routes follow existing state maintained roadways in and around the proposed business district.

## **Guiding Principle: Preserve Character of X-Roads Area**

Much of the area surrounding the Vienna Business District area has retained its rural character through the adoption of a “community place and country” growth pattern. Most new urban-type growth has been situated in close proximity to the Vienna business area. The balance of the northern area consists of low density residential housing, working farms, woodlands, and natural spaces. According to the Lewisville Comprehensive Plan, high quality subdivisions built on very large lots shall be encouraged, with an emphasis on the preservation of trees and other natural assets. Conservation subdivisions in the form of PRD’s and cluster designs are also allowed to promote the preservation of open space. The goal of the Vienna Small Area Plan is to identify those attributes of the existing district to be preserved while proposing new standards that facilitate implementation of the plan.



The intersection of Yadkinville Road and Lewisville-Vienna Road at the heart of current business district in the Vienna area

## **Area Plan Recommendations**

- Protect the historic character of the Vienna X-Roads area by protecting those older structures that have come to symbolize the community and create a “sense of place.”
- Encourage infill projects that support the proposed use of the district for mixed-use, limited retail, convenience services, professional offices and single-family residential.
- Acknowledge the high value of land adjoining the thoroughfare (Yadkinville Road) and focus high quality commercial development to the Vienna district.



Brookstown United Methodist Church

- Discourage the lining of roadways with dysfunctional commercial buildings with little or no connection or relation to the public roadway.
- Create a compactness and tighter form for the district by discouraging standard “strip type developments.”
- Create a ‘downtown’ feel with street-edge buildings, pedestrian accessibility, public buildings, pocket parks and other open spaces.
- Utilize this plan to identify areas where parks, open space and recreational facilities are needed and take appropriate action to acquire suitable land, obtain easements or enhance facilities when opportunities arise to do so.



West Central Community Center built in 1969

- With the cooperation of the Board of Directors of the West Central Community Center, create a plan for the preservation and enhancement of the facility with the goal of improving the building and surrounding property for passive and active recreational activities.



- Restrict permitted uses within the district to those perceived to be complimentary of its intent.
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment that is also auto-accessible.
- Bicycles are accommodated on new roadways as a comprehensive approach to future transportation improvements providing an alternative to automobile dependence.
- Encourage the creation of walkways on private property that connect with sidewalks provided within the public right-of-way.
- Encourage public investments to improve the ‘public realm’ of the district by adding sidewalks and decorative lamppost to roadway improvement projects within the district.
- Replace the existing intersection of Yadkinville Road and Lewisville-Vienna Road with a single-lane roundabout with landscaped center island and pedestrian walkways around the perimeter.

### **Implementation**

In order for the vision and recommendations expressed by this plan to be realized, specific implementation steps will need to be taken by the Town of Lewisville and others. Many implementation steps seek to provide the conditions under which the plan vision can be achieved, by way of providing sensible land use regulation, necessary public investments, the development of appropriate programs and policies, and other factors.

## **Controlling Factors**

The implementation of the plan will depend on action being taken to:

- revise existing development and zoning regulations,
- undertake more detailed studies to refine the general recommendations that have been identified by this plan, and
- make infrastructure improvements

The execution and implementation of the plan will likely be phased and is subject to a variety of factors all of which will determine their timing.

