

Hall Place Neighborhood Initiatives Plan



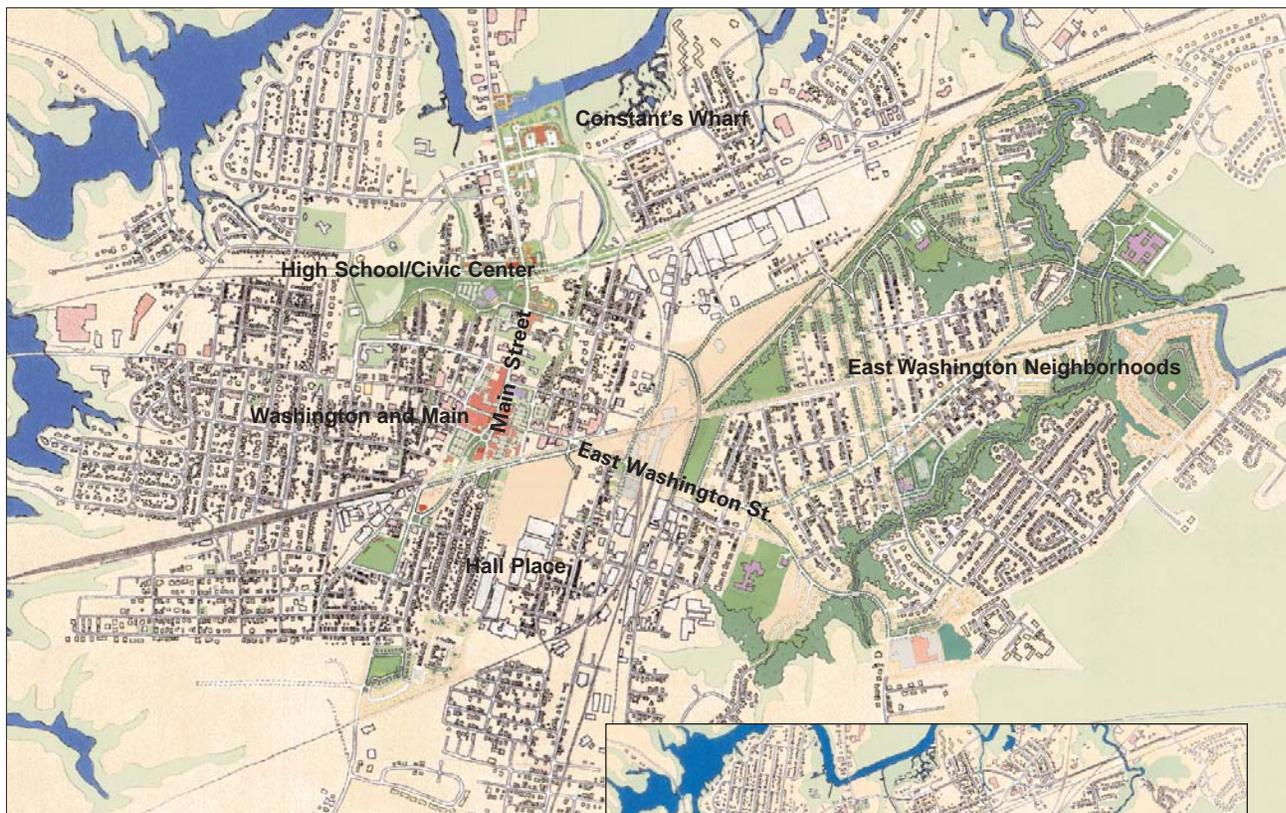
Prepared for
The City of Suffolk

by
Urban Design Associates (UDA)

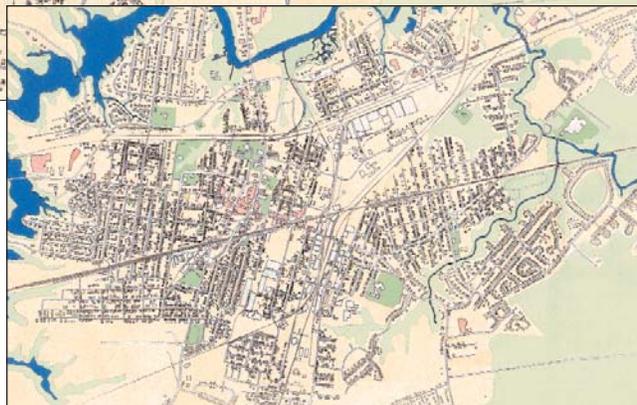
May 1999

Table of Contents

i	Analysis	1
	1. The Neighborhood Planning Process	
	2. Constraints	
ii	Hall Place Neighborhood	3
	1. Vision	
	2. Hall Place Plan	
	3. Initiatives	
	• Entrance, Hall Avenue, Traffic Patterns	
	• Morgan Street	
	• Planters Park Area	



The Downtown Suffolk Vision Plan—Proposed



Downtown Suffolk—Existing Conditions

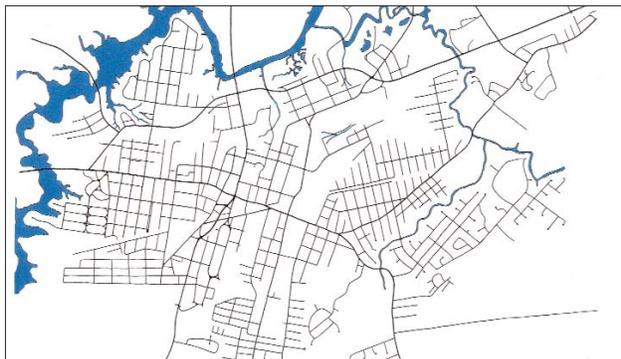
The Neighborhood Planning Process

This Plan for the Hall Place neighborhood is part of the City's ongoing Downtown Initiatives Planning Process. The process began in 1997 when Urban Design Associates (UDA) was hired by the City to create a plan for the historic Downtown area as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Working with the Downtown Steering Committee, UDA created a plan that focused on repairing the fractured urban pattern

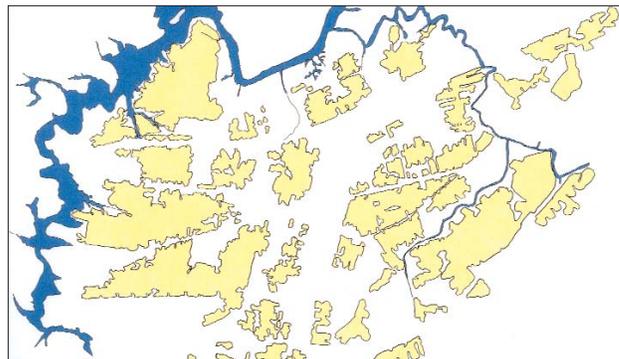
with a series of connector streets designed to create an interconnected street network. The second phase of the plan focused on three key initiative areas: Constant's Wharf, the Old High School Area, and the commercial core at the intersection of Main and Washington Streets.

This current phase of the planning process continues with residential neighborhood initiative plans. The underlying premise is that for down-

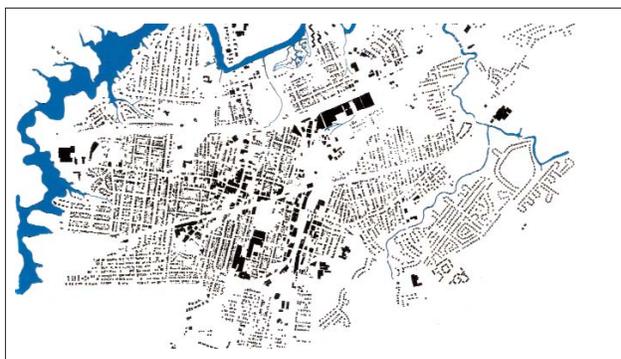
town revitalization to occur, it is necessary to revitalize and strengthen the downtown residential neighborhoods. The health of the commercial core is sustained by the neighborhoods, and in turn, people are attracted to live downtown by a strong and vibrant downtown core.



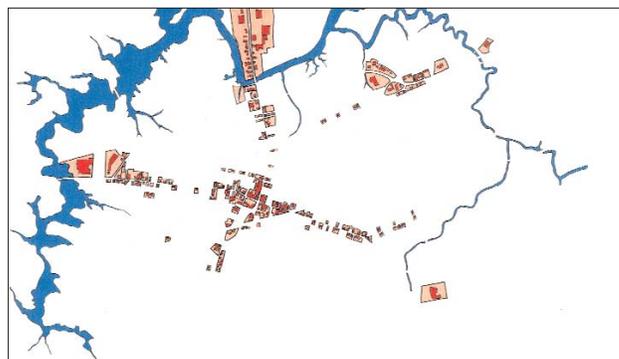
Streets: Suffolk's downtown street network is disconnected, forcing vehicles to use a small number of through-streets and causing major traffic congestion.



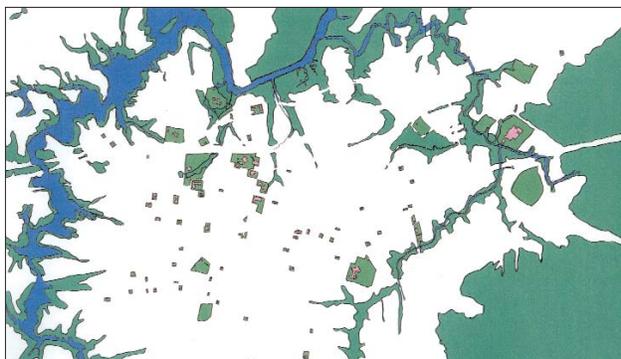
Settlement Pattern: Downtown Suffolk is made up of a series of isolated neighborhoods.



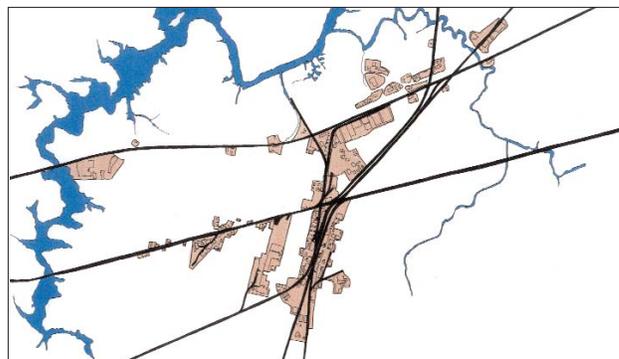
Figure/Ground: The building pattern is typical of older cities with large commercial and warehouse buildings ringed by clusters of small, residential scale buildings.



Commercial: Commercial development is located primarily along three major streets: Washington, Main, and Constance.



Parks, Institutions and Open Space: The open space is dominated by the Nansemond River/lake system and Shingle Creek which encircle the downtown on three sides



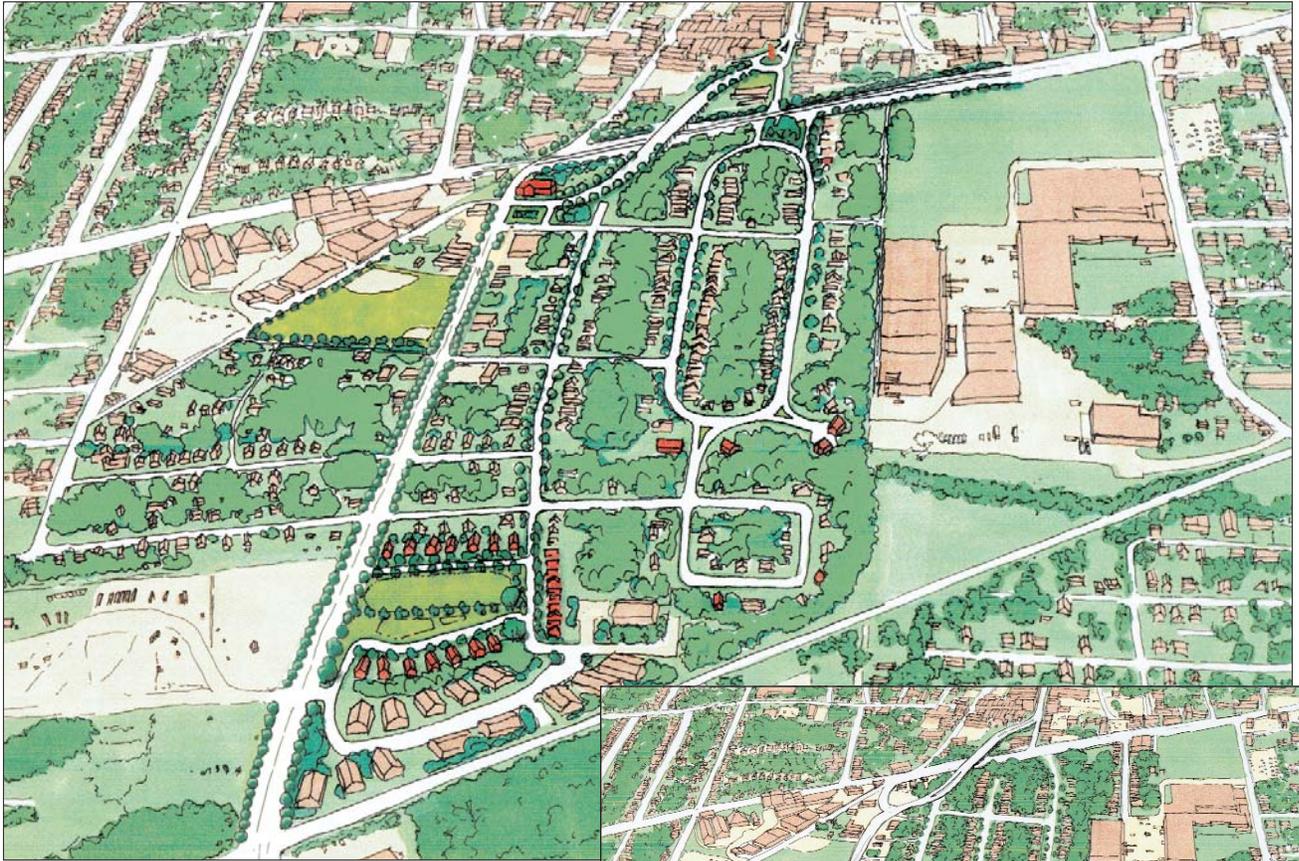
Industry & Railways: The four major railway lines which crisscross the downtown area serve the remaining industries, but act as a major barrier to road traffic.

Constraints

X-Ray Analysis

The neighborhood vision planning process began with an analysis of the existing site conditions. The most obvious problem in the Downtown area is the lack of an interconnected

street network, due primarily to the river valleys and railway lines which interrupt the street pattern and isolate neighborhoods from one another.

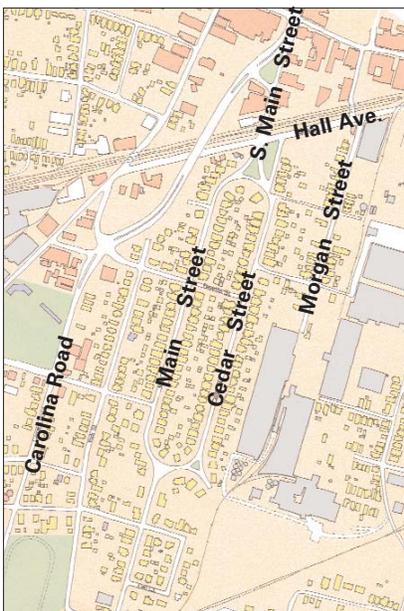


Hall Place Perspective—Proposed



Hall Place Perspective—Existing Conditions

Vision



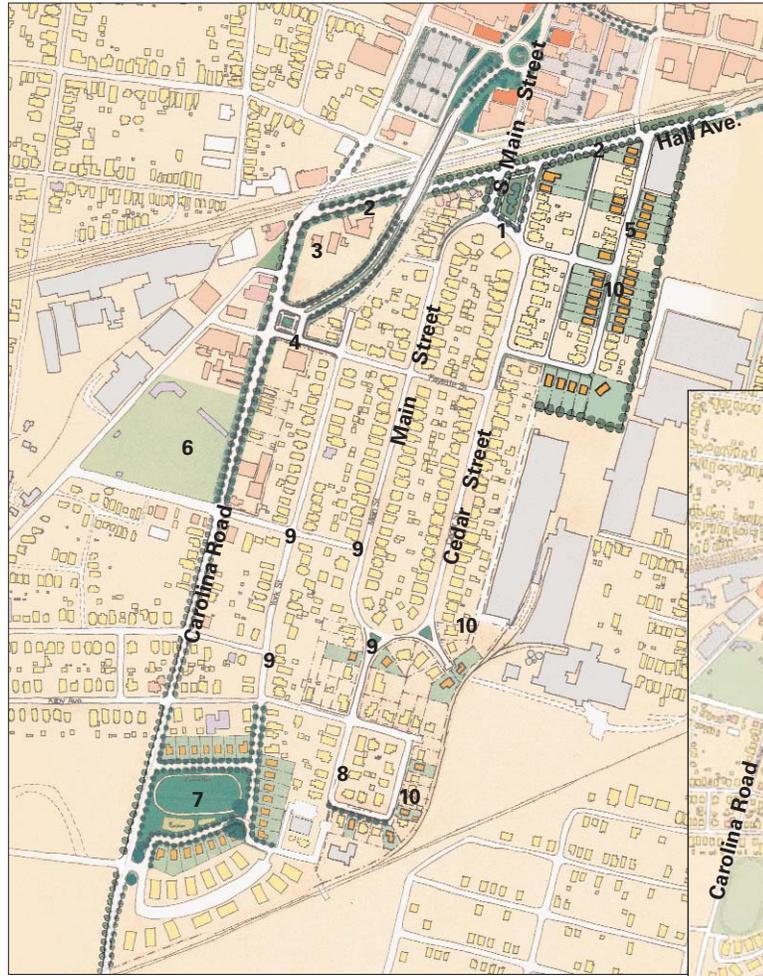
Hall Place—Existing Conditions Plan

Hall Place, located directly south of Downtown, is a wonderful, well-preserved, historic neighborhood that was originally home to many of the City's early industrialists and professionals. The neighborhood went through a long period of decline during the 1960's and 70's, but has experienced a gradual renaissance over the past decade.

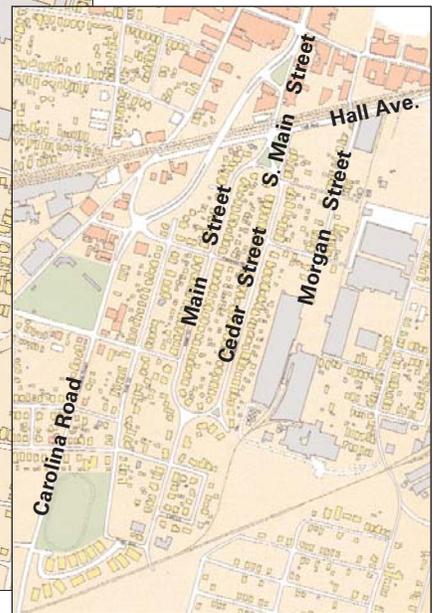
Neighborhood problems include

aging homes and homeowners, neglected rental properties, poor edge conditions, high speed traffic, crowded parking, and cut-through pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Hall Place has a well organized and active civic league who together with the City and Urban Design Associates, are working toward creating and implementing a vision plan for the neighborhood.



Hall Place Plan—Proposed

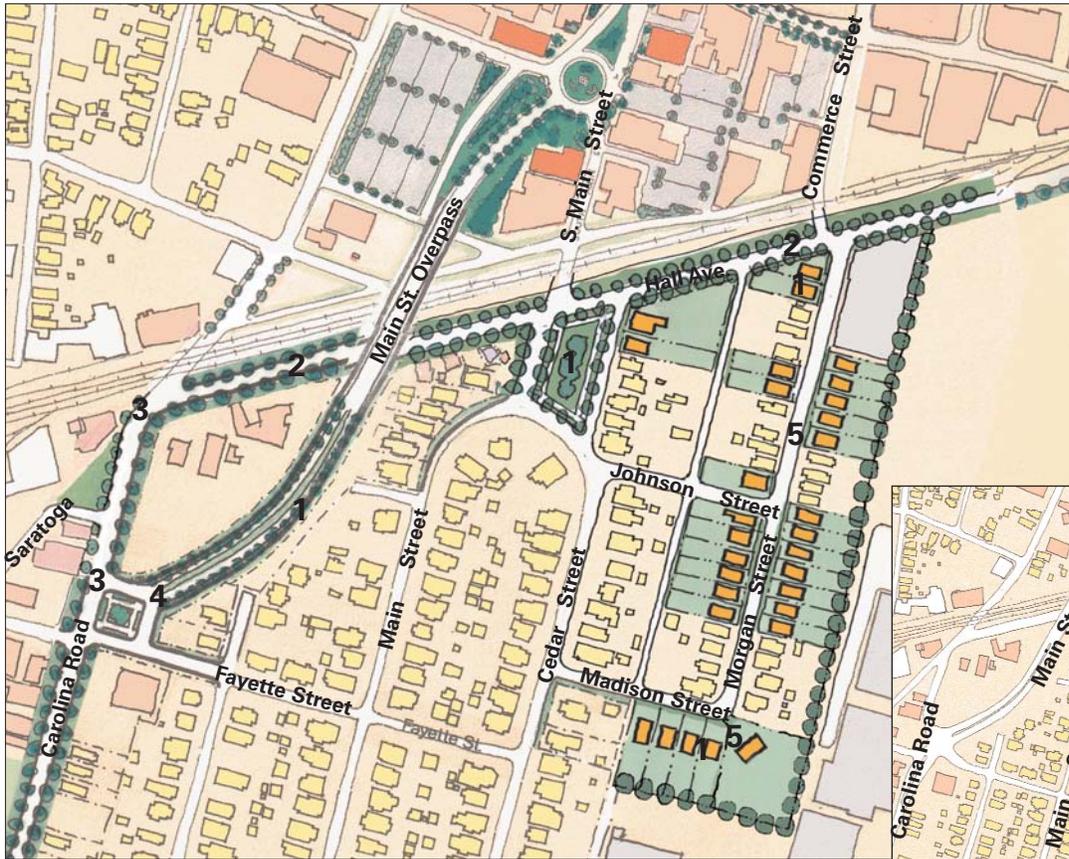


Hall Place—Existing Conditions

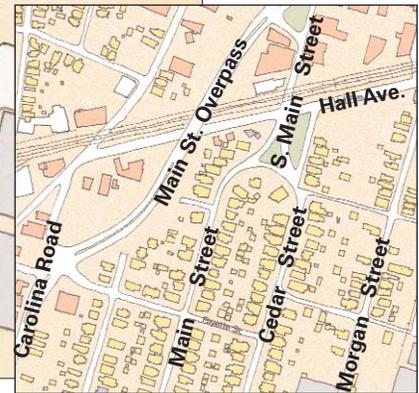
Hall Place Plan

Initiatives

1. **Entrance:** Create a new Entrance Park at South Main St., Cedar Ave., and Hall Ave.
2. **Hall Avenue:** Improve Hall Ave. Streetscaping – sidewalks, planting strip, street trees.
3. **Through-Traffic Patterns:** Realign Caroline/Saratoga/Hall Ave. intersection to route through-traffic onto Hall Ave.
4. **Local Traffic:** Route local traffic onto Main Street Overpass or into the neighborhood via Fayette St.
5. **Morgan Street:** Revitalize Morgan Street Area. Two alternatives: (a) residential infill and (b) industrial.
6. **Peanut Park Improvements:** New landscaping and bleachers.
7. **Planters Park:** Redesign Planters Park and surround with new houses (“eyes on the street”).
8. **South Main:** Close South Main Street at Earl Court to reduce neighborhood cut-through traffic.
9. **Traffic Calming:** Introduce Traffic Calming Devices on South Main, Cedar and York Streets.
10. **Targeted Acquisition/Infill:** Undertake a Targeted Acquisition Program for problem properties.



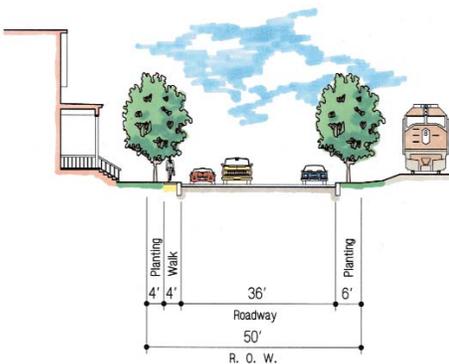
Proposed Plan: New configuration at South Main/Cedar/Hall and Hall Ave.



Existing Conditions

Initiatives

Entrance
Hall Avenue
Traffic Patterns



Hall Avenue—Proposed Cross Section

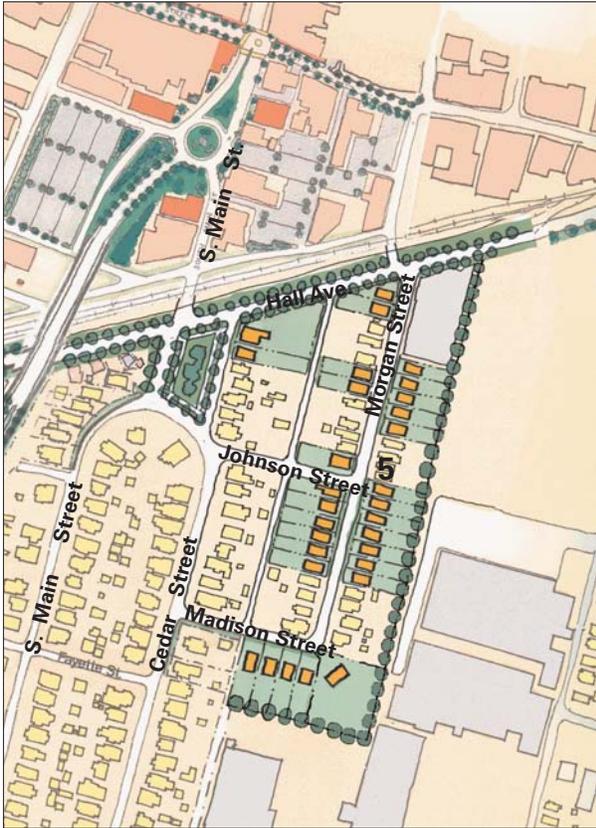
1. Neighborhood Entrance: The existing entrance park at Hall Avenue is bisected and creates a confusing traffic pattern. The proposed entrance park is simplified, creating a more coherent and organized entrance into the neighborhood as well as providing a better connection to the South Main Street commercial area.

2. Hall Avenue is currently a wide (40') industrial-scale street. The plan creates a more residential edge for the neighborhood with improved streetscaping between Carolina Road and Liberty Avenue, including new sidewalks and street trees.

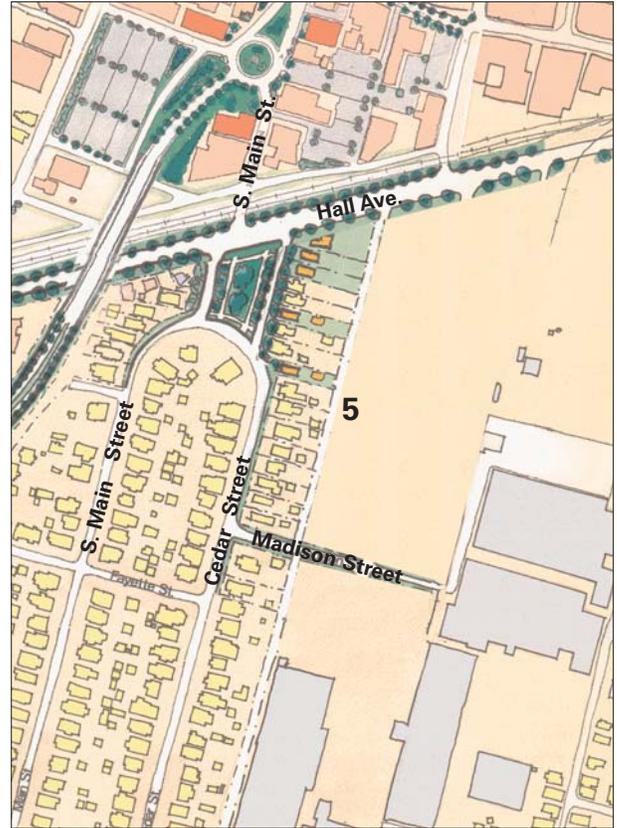
3. Through Traffic Patterns: The current road configuration along Carolina Road routes most traffic onto the Main Street overpass—a pat-

tern that crowds the Main Street commercial area with through traffic. The plan realigns the intersection at Carolina Road and Saratoga Street, routing through traffic up Carolina to Hall Avenue. Saratoga is also reconfigured to meet Carolina at a right angle to eliminate the awkward intersection at Hall Ave. Carolina will be improved with new streetscaping.

4. Local Traffic: A new traffic square at the intersection of Carolina, Fayette and Main Street, will route local traffic heading for the downtown commercial area either onto the Main Street Overpass, or straight up Saratoga and into downtown.



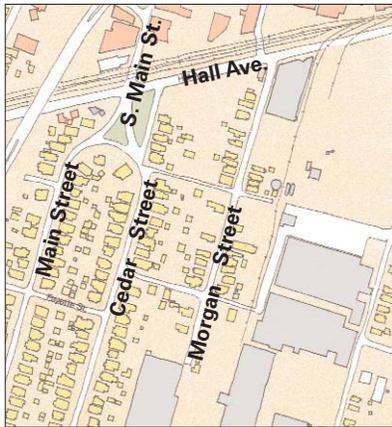
Proposed Plan A-Residential



Proposed Plan B-Industrial

Initiatives

Morgan Street



Existing Conditions

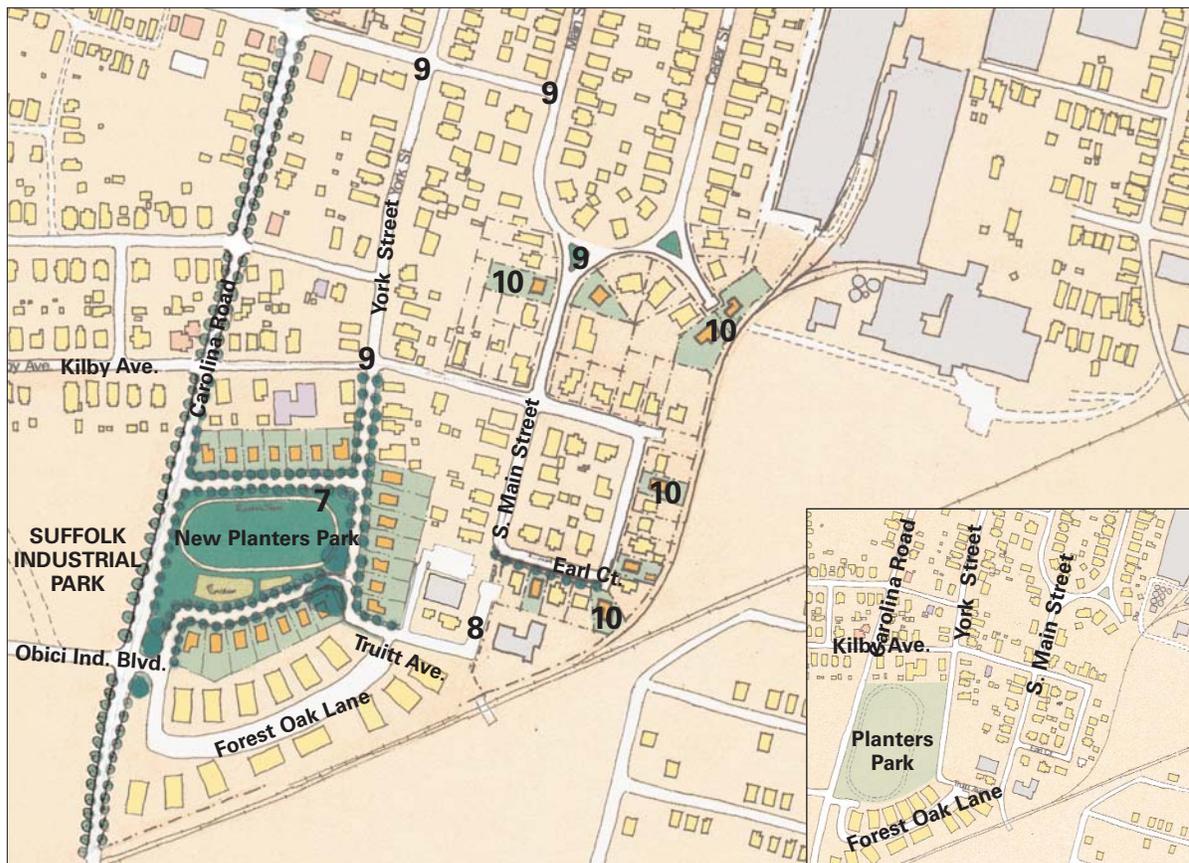
5. Morgan Street: Morgan Street, is located on the eastern side of the neighborhood adjacent to the Planters Peanut Factory. When the Planters factory was rebuilt and Johnson and Madison Streets were closed the street became badly deteriorated. The majority of houses are owned by absentee landlords and many are in dilapidated condition.

The plan recommends two alternative approaches for revitalizing this area:

(a) Residential Alternative: The idea with this alternative is to improve the area and reinforce it as a stable residential street. This would involve acquiring the problem properties and empty lots and replacing

them with new single family homes. Streetscape improvements are planned for Morgan as well as Johnson and Madison Streets to better connect the area to the rest of the neighborhood.

(b) Industrial Alternative: The idea with this alternative is to make a clear transition between the residential neighborhood and the industrial area to the east. This requires acquisition and clearance of all properties along both sides of Morgan Street. A new lane and landscaped buffer area would provide a transition to the expanded industrial area.



Proposed Plan

Existing Conditions

Initiatives

Planters Park Area



Eye level view looking east along the northern edge of the new Planters Park

7. Planters Park: Although heavily used, Planters Park and its surrounding area are faced with a number of problems. Houses and apartments back up to the park, providing little surveillance, there is a shortage of parking, and poor drainage.

In order to address these problems the park is reconfigured so that the long axis runs east-west. This provides room on the north and south to build new streets lined with single family homes facing the park. New houses will also be built on the empty lots on York Street. The houses provide “eyes on the street” and create a safer environment. The new streets accommodate parking on both sides, and will have an improved storm water drainage system.

8. South Main: Another neighborhood problem is cut-through, high-speed traffic. As a traffic calming measure the plan closes the south end of South Main Street at Earl Court. The Main entrance and egress for the Suffolk Station apartments is onto Carolina Road.

9. Traffic Calming: Other neighborhood traffic calming devices include corner “bulb-outs”, and/or traffic islands on South Main, Cedar and York Streets.

10. Targeted Acquisition/Infill: The plan also recommends that the City undertake a targeted acquisition/infill program replacing dilapidated properties and empty lots with new infill houses.