

Suffolk/Virginia

# Holland Village Initiatives Plan

*Prepared by* U R B A N D E S I G N A S S O C I A T E S

Prepared for  
City of Suffolk, Virginia

DECEMBER 2000



## Table of Contents

### *Acknowledgements*

<i>I Introduction</i>	I
The Neighborhood Planning Process	
Assets, Liabilities, Hopes and Dreams	
Existing Conditions Analysis	
<i>II Short Term Initiatives</i>	4
The Village Center	
Street Improvements	
Gateways	
<i>III Long Term Vision</i>	7
The Village Center	
Northwest Holland	
Northeast Holland	
Southeast Holland	
Southwest Holland	

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# I Introduction

THE INITIATIVES PLAN FOR the Village of Holland is part of the City of Suffolk's ongoing 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. Since that time, the process has expanded to include plans for other parts of the City including the East Washington neighborhoods, Hall Place, and more recently the outlying historic villages of Holland and Whaleyville.

## The Neighborhood Planning Process

The physical plan for the village of Holland emerged from a two-phase process, both involving community participation.

The first phase consisted of documenting, analyzing, and understanding the existing conditions and historic structure of the village. The design team visited Holland to gather data and take a walking tour guided by long-time residents. From the information collected, the design team drew base maps and generated a set of analysis drawings, called X-Rays. Each X-Ray focuses on one or two key pieces of information, such as streets or topography, helping the design team to understand the neighborhood patterns and make informed decisions during the design process.

The second phase, and the focus of the UDA planning process, was the design charrette - an intense, multi-day design workshop, held on-site with the village residents, workers and property owners. Using the charrette process, the plan is created by the local community, with the design team facilitating the process and creating the drawings.

The Holland design charrette was held December 11-13 at the Holland Christian Church on S. Quay Road. The charrette began with a kick-off meeting where the design team asked the participants three simple questions: what are Holland's assets, what are its liabilities, and what are the hopes and dreams for the community in the future? The design team used the answers to these questions to generate a list of design guidelines which acted as a checklist during the design process (See p. 2). Overall, the community agreed that the Village of Holland should plan for moderate growth while maintaining its small town character and image.



*The village of Holland is centered on the intersection of Holland Road, Ruritan Boulevard, and South Quay Road, and is surrounded mostly by agricultural land.*

During the charrette, the community considered both short-term and long-term initiatives. Short-term initiatives are small-scale improvements that can be implemented over the next year or two from the City’s capital budget. Long term initiatives are larger in scale and look ahead 10 to 20 years. In order for the long term development initiatives to proceed, it will be necessary to construct a local sewage treatment facility as recommended in the 2018 Suffolk Comprehensive Plan. As one purpose of the plan is to help identify public service and infrastructure requirements, it is clear that Holland will require some form of sewage treatment plant to accommodate the growth that the plan projects.

**Assets, Liabilities, Hopes and Dreams**

**Assets/Good Things**

- Historic small town feeling
- Historic houses and commercial buildings
- Rural atmosphere, quiet
- Clean
- Not commercialized
- Tradition (many families go back generations)
- Active, friendly residents
- Reasonably priced houses

**Liabilities/Bad Things**

- Failing septic systems
- No sewer Service
- Antiquated water service (2" main)
- Poor storm water drainage System
- Speeding traffic (Holland Rd. and Ruritan Blvd.)
- Lack of stores (grocery, drug, dry cleaners, etc.)
- Not enough parks (existing park too small)

- Lack of sidewalks, poor condition
- Empty Buildings

**Hopes and Dreams: Short Term**

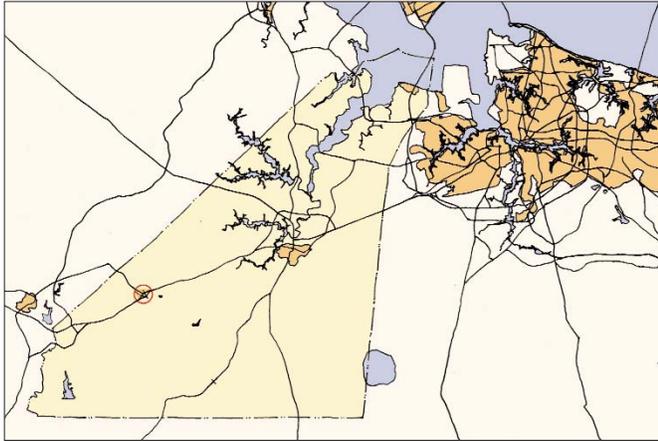
- Improve the business core, more small businesses
- Street improvements (sidewalks, trees, historic lights)
- Clean vacant lots
- Clean and maintain existing ditches
- Calm traffic
- Gateway signs
- Improve Peanut Drive

**Hopes and Dreams: Long Term**

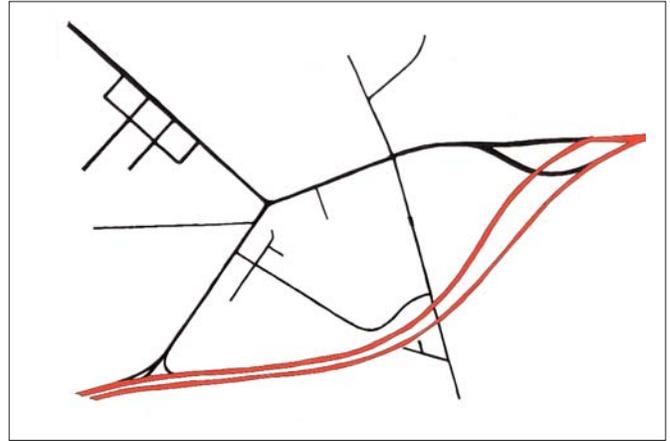
- Pursue growth /maintain small town feeling
- Improve/enlarge park
- Improve the commercial center
- Rehabilitate old train station (library, museum, restaurant)
- Preserve the old cotton gin
- Create a farmers’ market
- Build new houses with historic feel
- Build a package sewage plant
- Improve storm drainage and water systems

**Design Principles**

- 1** Accommodate growth while maintaining quaint, historic, small town character.
- 2** Respect and build upon Holland's history
- 3** Revive the downtown core / attract small businesses.
- 4** Develop a Civic Center.
- 5** Calm traffic.
- 6** Allow growth through the development of a package sewage treatment plant (or similar technology).
- 7** Pursue the development of a local sewage treatment facility by projecting and planning for moderate future growth.

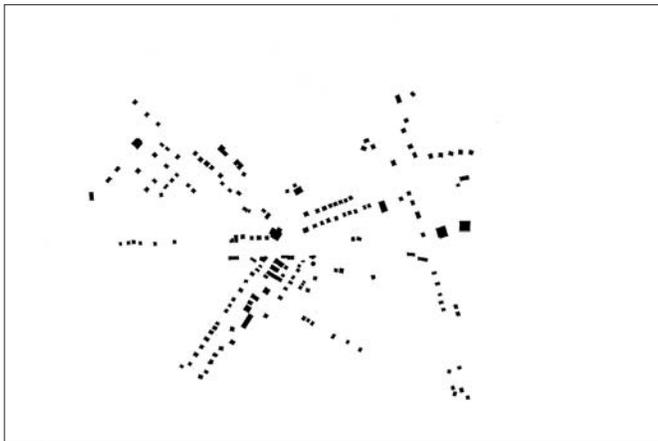


*Location:* The village of Holland is located in the southwest of Suffolk in the Tidewater Region of Virginia, along State Route 58, a major east-west connector road.

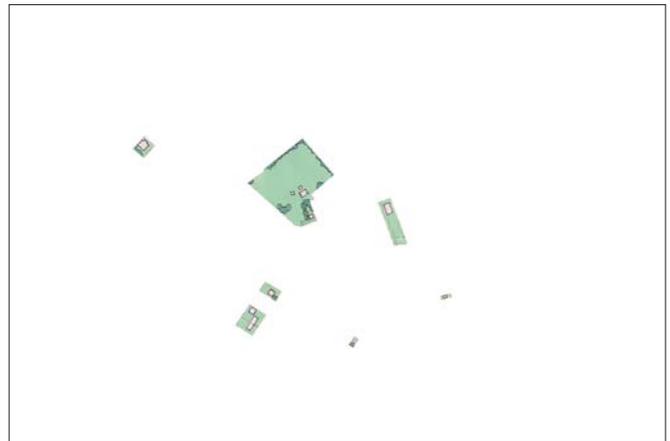


*Streets & Highways:* The intersection of Holland Road, S. Quay Road (Rte 58) and Ruritan Boulevard form the core of the village while the Route 58 Bypass diverts traffic around the core and acts as a southern boundary.

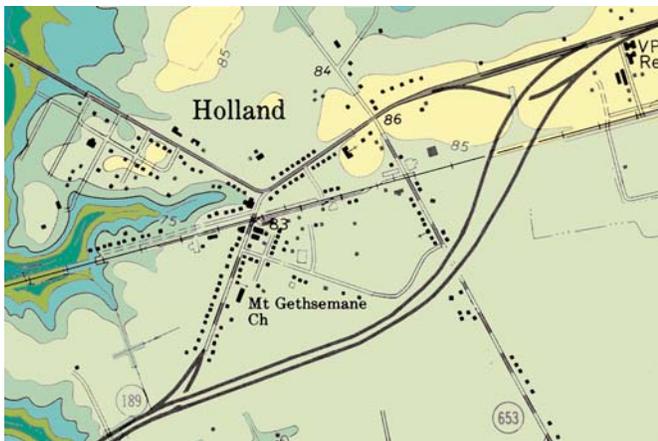
3



*Figure/Ground:* The building pattern is typical of traditional "crossroads" villages with large commercial and industrial buildings located at the core and at the edges, and residential scale buildings radiating out from the center.



*Parks, Institutions & Open Space:* The village of Holland has one major park on the former High School site, and four churches.

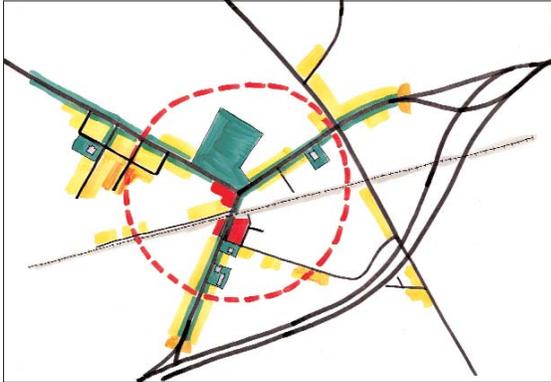


*Railway & Topography:* Both the railway line and the ravine act as barriers that make road connections difficult and restrict the amount of developable land around the village.



*Portrait - Existing Conditions:* The portrait shows agricultural land in light green, parks in medium green, institutions in purple, commercial buildings in pink, and residential buildings in yellow.

## II Short Term Initiatives



### Frameworks

*Diagram of short term initiatives showing streetscaping improvements along the major roads and a five-minute walking radius from the Village Center.*

THE SHORT TERM INITIATIVES for Holland consist of several straight-forward public improvements that can be undertaken immediately using the City's Capital Plan funds (approximately \$50,000). The primary concern of the residents is the existing water and sewage issues, therefore the first short term initiative is to expedite a feasibility study for water and sewer service. Beyond that, the design team and participants concluded that the greatest aesthetic impact would come from streetscape improvements along the main streets and at the gateways or portals marking the main entrances into town. The plan shows more than can be constructed under this year's budget, therefore it will be necessary to prioritize the initiatives and implement them over time.

### A Village Center Improvements

**1 Crossroads and Post Office Improvements** The crossroads, the historic heart of the village of Holland, currently feels wide open and empty. Combined with the Ruritan Monument improvements, adding landscaping and low brick walls to the front of the old hotel site and on either side of the Ray's Repair Shop entrances will help to define the space and beautify the intersection. Nearby, the new post office building, set back behind parking on a badly



### Short Term Initiatives

- A** Village Center Improvements
- B** Gateways: Ruritan Boulevard, South Quay Road, and Holland Road Entrances
- C** Streetscaping improvements



maintained lot, does not fit in with the historic character of Holland. Adding new walls around the parking lot can define the street, while landscaping can shield the cars and improve the appearance of the site.

- 2 Ruritan Monument** Proposed improvements around the Ruritan Monument include a new plaza designed to be on axis with S. Quay Road. This is proposed as the first phase of a larger park improvement initiative.
- 3 Streetscape Improvements** This initiative can help to revitalize the commercial section of S. Quay Road. The sidewalks can be widened, and landscaped curb bumpouts protect parked cars. Historic street lighting and furniture and the addition of street banners would make the area more pedestrian-friendly.

**B Street Improvements**

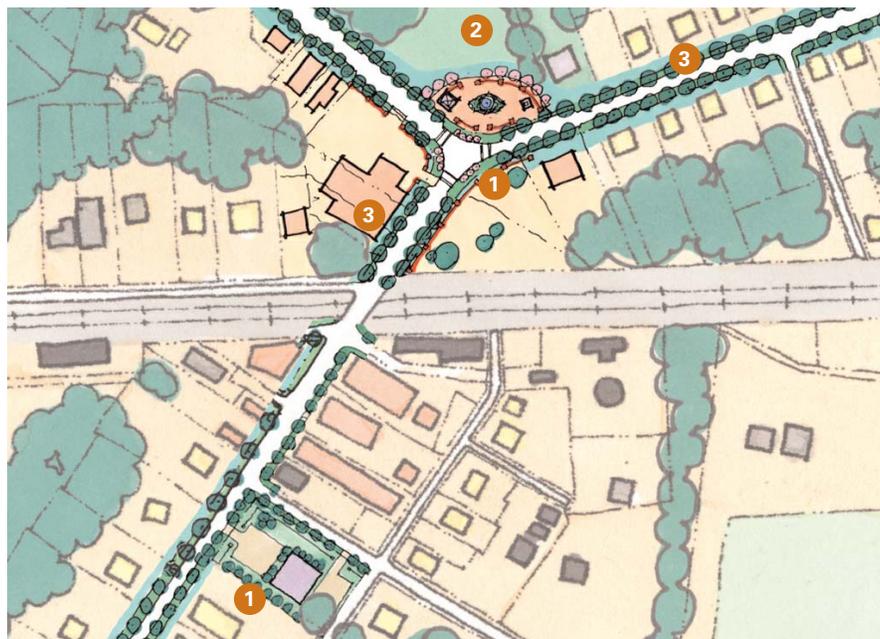
Proposed street improvements include the cleanup and maintenance of existing drainage ditches throughout Holland.

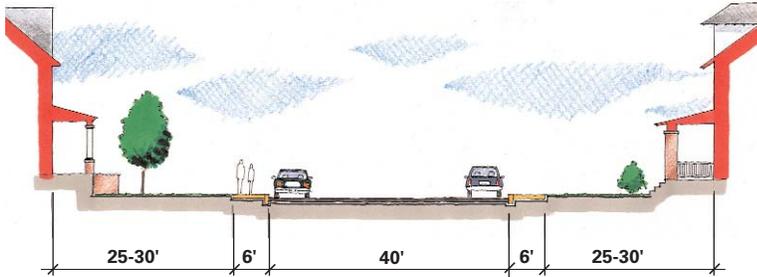
Additional improvements, beginning with the main roads of Ruritan, Holland, and South Quay, can slow traffic on the residential streets to make them safer and more pedestrian oriented. All streets would receive historic lighting fixtures. The treatment proposed for South Quay Road includes landscaped bulb-outs to protect parked cars and slow traffic. On Ruritan Boulevard and Holland Road, short landscaped median pieces can slow traffic while still allowing a center turning lane.

**C Gateways**

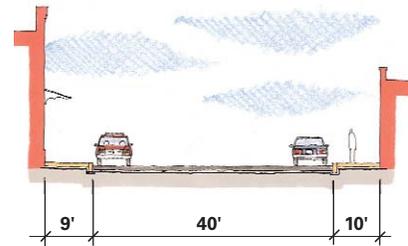
Gateways marking the entrances to Holland on Ruritan Boulevard, Holland Road, and South Quay Road, could include landscaping and signs that indicate to people passing through that they have arrived in historic Holland. Gateways can also help to slow traffic on the main roads by making them feel less like high-speed thoroughfares and more like entrances to a village street.

*The Village Center as it exists today (above) and as proposed (right).*

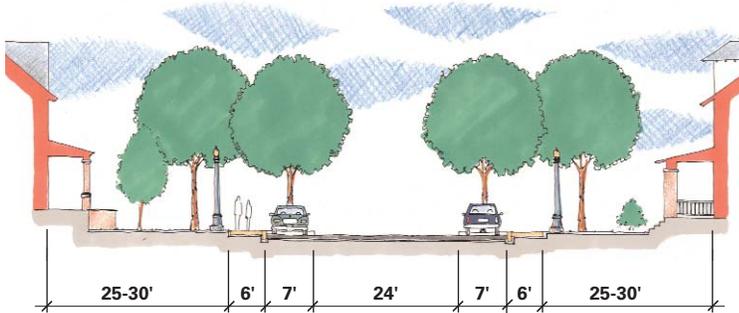




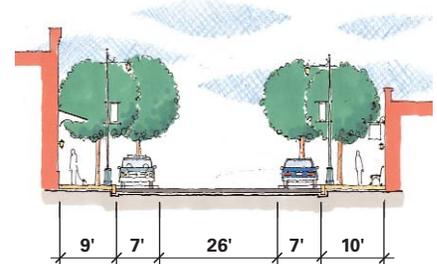
South Quay Road (Residential) Existing



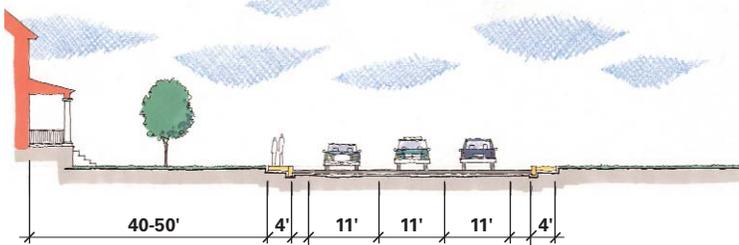
South Quay Road Existing



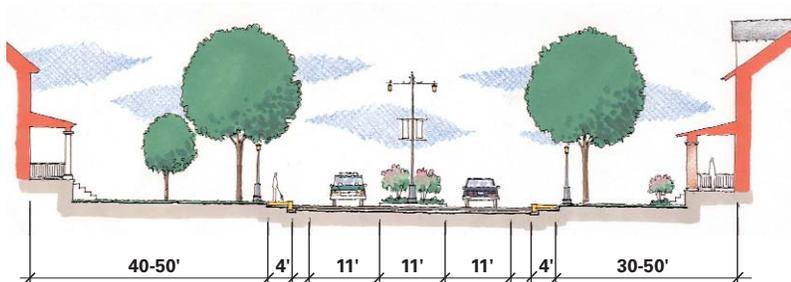
South Quay Road (Residential) Proposed



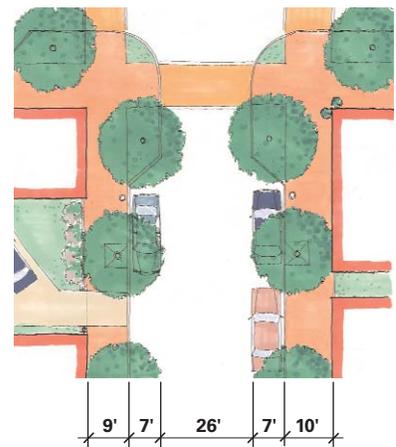
South Quay Road Proposed



Ruritan Boulevard Existing



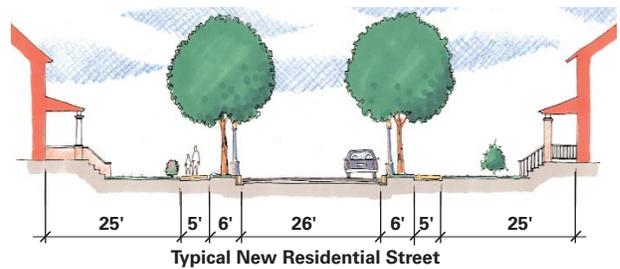
Ruritan Boulevard Proposed



Typical Commercial Street

### III Long Term Vision

THE LONG TERM VISION provides for the development of new, traditional neighborhoods that will maintain Holland’s historic small town character. The plan shows approximately 400-500 new residential lots, (similar in size to existing lots), that together create complete and connected neighborhoods each centered on parks and within easy access of the village center. To accommodate this growth, it is necessary to have adequate collection, treatment, and disposal of waste water as well as upgraded water service. Houses would maintain the same character as the existing residential buildings, with elements such as front porches facing the streets. New streets would receive the same lighting, landscaping, and traffic calming as existing streets under the short term initiatives. Development should be phased to create complete neighborhoods. The long term initiatives are presented as a “shopping list” of ideas that can be prioritized and implemented over time.





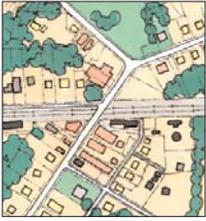
**Frameworks**

*Diagram of long-term initiatives showing the major residential infill areas (yellow), the new parks and streetscapes (green), and improved commercial development (red). The dotted red circles indicate five-minute walking radii. Most parts of the village would be a five to seven minute walk from the core, and each neighborhood is centered around a park or green space.*



**Long Term Vision**

- A** Village Center
- B** Northwest Holland
- C** Northeast Holland & Holland Park
- D** Southeast Holland
- E** Southwest Holland



**A Village Center**

**1 Holland Park** During the charrette several residents recommended a centrally located passive park in addition to the ball-fields. The plan therefore shows a new green behind the new Ruritan Plaza that provides space for picnics and walking without interfering with the active park and ball fields behind. It also allows for Founders' Day gatherings and other similar events. The adjacent house could be renovated into the Ruritan Club headquarters.

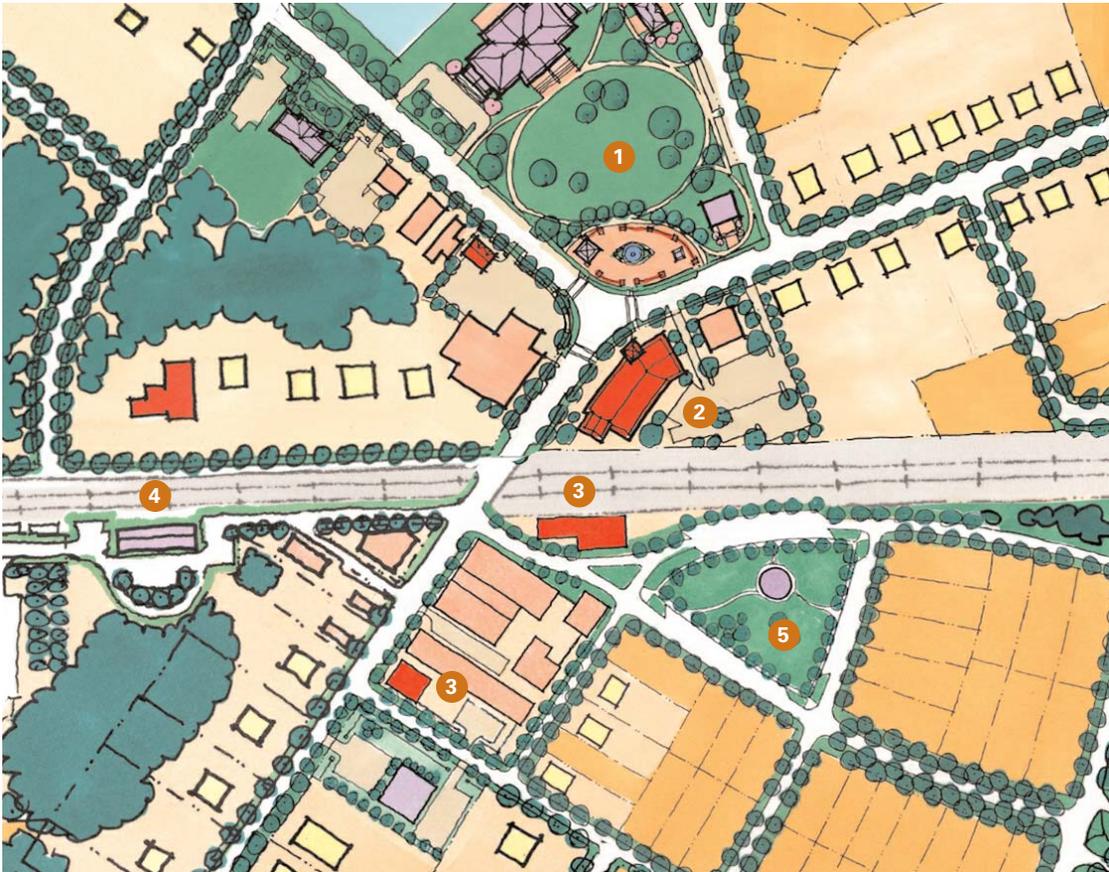
**2 Commercial Building** The old hotel site on Holland Road at the main crossroads is an ideal location for a new building with retail on the ground floor and offices above. A shared parking lot backing up to the railway tracks will provide parking

for the new building and the bank.

**3 Village Center Rehabilitation** The most successful way to revitalize an older downtown area is to build on the historic character. To this end, the plan proposes restoring as many of the historic main street buildings as possible, including the old warehouse adjacent to the railway tracks and the municipal building, for use by small businesses. Peanut Drive can also be improved to make it a part of the village center.

**4 Railway Station Rehabilitation** The old Holland railway station can be renovated and turned into one of many possible uses, such as a public library, restaurant, shop, or even a combination of these uses. It is surrounded by a small plaza that can be used as parking or as open space.

*The Village Center as it looks today (above) and as proposed in the long term vision (below).*



**5 Old Cotton Mill Park** Many small towns find that preserving a centrally located old industrial or agricultural building is a good way to remind people of the town's heritage and to promote civic pride. To this end, the old cotton mill can be renovated into a public building, such as a commu-

nity center, located in the center of a new downtown park. The park would be surrounded by new homes (5.1) or, if more commercial space is needed, by mixed-use buildings (5.2). Parking on both sides of the street around the perimeter of the park will serve village center businesses.

10



**Eye-level perspective**

*A view at the crossroads looking South down South Quay Road, as it is today (right) and as proposed (below).*





*The Northwest area of Holland as it exists (above) and as proposed in the long term vision (below).*

**B Northwest Holland**

- 1 Community Center** A renovated community center sits in a park with fields and a tot lot, and is surrounded by housing (1.1). An alternative scheme (1.2) shows how the park can be expanded for additional recreation areas.
- 2 Road connections** A connection across the shallow end of the ravine to Tree Lane can help to revitalize that area, which includes streetscape improvements, residential infill on empty and dilapidated lots, and even the restoration of the old theater.
- 3 Completing the grid** The completion of the street grid South of Ruritan Boulevard is aided by the lots

and streets that have already been platted. The new neighborhood centers on the community building.

- 4 North Ruritan Boulevard** The plan proposes to continue the street grid to the north side of Ruritan Boulevard, with room to expand the grid as needed. Houses front agricultural fields and a small neighborhood park at the center of the development.
- 5 Connection to Hickory Neck** A street from the proposed neighborhood to Crestwood Drive will allow local traffic, pedestrians and bicycles to access Holland Park and the village center without having to use busy Ruritan Boulevard.





*The Northeast area of Holland as it looks today (above) and as proposed in the long term vision (below).*

**C Northeast Holland**

- 1 Holland Civic Center** A new recreation center (1.1) is at the heart of Holland Park. Combined with the construction of a new library across Ruritan Boulevard (1.2), this area becomes the civic center adjacent to the Village Center and the renovated theater on Tree Lane.
- 2 Holland Park** Requests by residents for more park space led to the redesign of Holland Park, where the sports fields and some new courts are arranged in a new configuration. Parking is absorbed into the park and along streets.
- 3 New Neighborhoods** New residential development fronts Holland

Park and connects to Glen Haven Drive. Homes front agricultural land, and create a pattern that can be expanded if more residential development is needed.

- 4 Connections to existing neighborhoods** Completing residential infill along Kingsale Road from Glen Haven connects Holland to nearby residential areas to the north.
- 5 Grainery/Newsoms Infill** Filling in the area between Holland Road and the railroad tracks with new residential development converts unaccessible leftover spaces into an integral part of the compact walkable village.



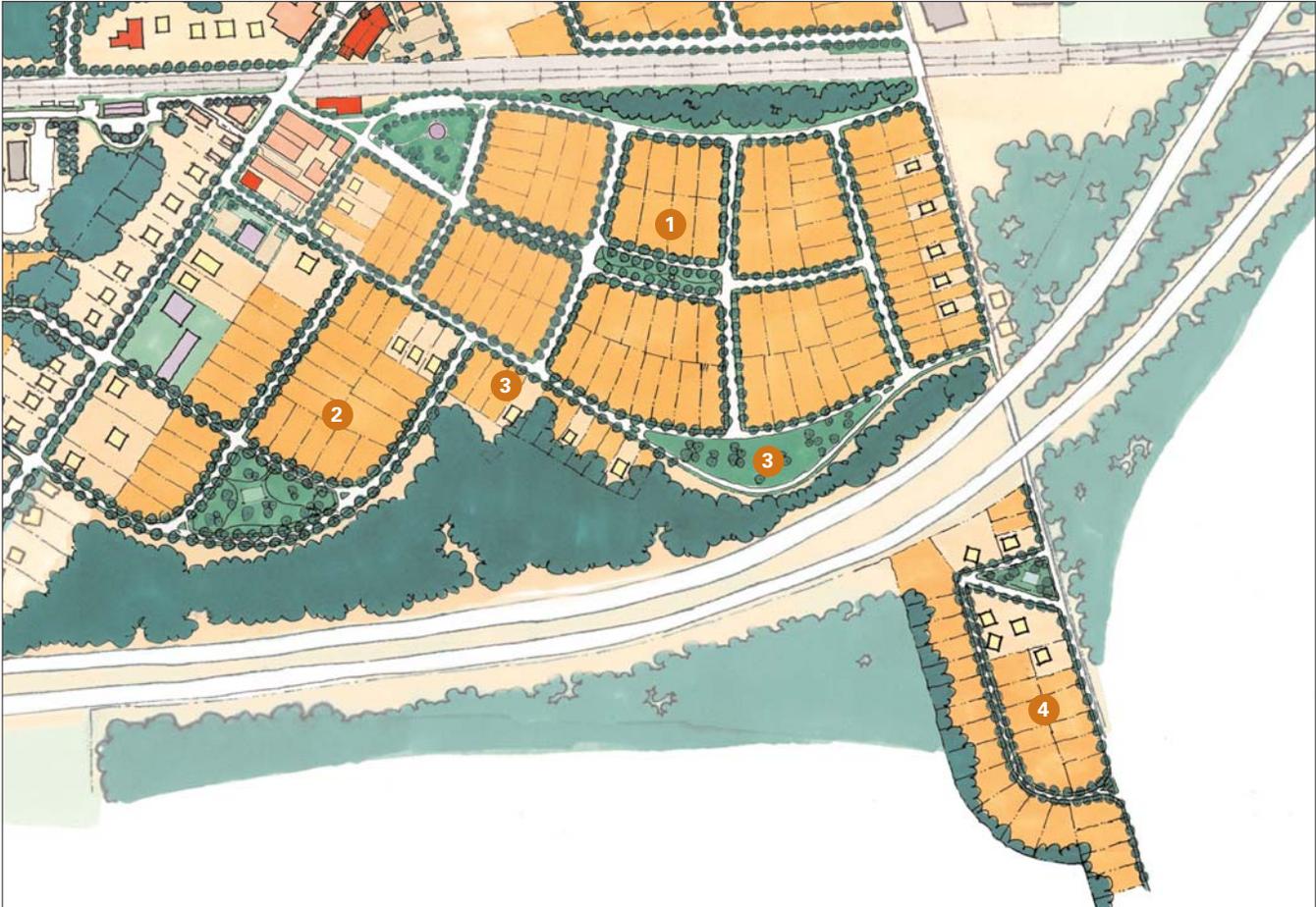


**D Southeast Holland**

- 1 Residential Development** New residential development between the railroad and Cumberland Lane extends from the Cotton Mill Park east to Dutch Road, which receives infill development, and centers on a new neighborhood park. Streets connecting parks will have an extra wide verge with a double row of trees.
- 2 Infill Neighborhood** New residential blocks are developed on unused land between Cumberland Lane and the bypass, leaving a generous buffer of forested land and connecting to South Quay Road.

- 3 Cumberland Lane Revitalization** Cumberland Lane is revitalized as a residential street with infill on vacant properties. The curve in the road becomes an ideal location for a park that serves both as a neighborhood amenity and a buffer from the busy bypass.
- 4 Dutch Road Neighborhood Infill** Residential development and churches along the southern part of Dutch Road were cut off from the rest of Holland with the construction of the bypass. Completing these blocks and solving the odd angles of the streets with a neighborhood park can revitalize this area.

*The Southeast area of Holland as it looks today (above) and as proposed in the long term vision (below).*





*The Southwest area of Holland as it looks today (above) and as proposed in the long term vision (below).*

**E Southwest Holland**

- 1 Southwest Residential Development** The plan for the new southwest residential neighborhood is constrained by the railroad tracks and industrial use to the north, and Route 189/58 to the south. The plan uses two small parks to create an inward focus for the neighborhood. The houses at the south end face the a crescent park and turn their back on the busy highway. The plan also maintains rights of way openings to the west to allow for future neighborhood expansion.
- 2 Connecting the Street Grid** The original development plan for Holland provided for expansion by maintaining a street right of way perpendicular to S. Quay Road. The plan creates two new streets which

will tie into the proposed streets on the south side of S. Quay Road, thereby connecting the new neighborhoods together and providing direct access from the new neighborhood to the commercial center.

- 3 North End** The north end of the neighborhood adjacent to the railroad tracks is currently occupied by an industrial land use. One iteration of the plan provides for the continuation of this business and uses landscaping to buffer the site against the backyards of the surrounding residential lots (3.1). Should the business decide to relocate, the plan can be adjusted to allow for residential development of the whole area without affecting the rest of the new neighborhood pattern(3.2).

