Moving Toward Walkable Redevelopment
THE SETTING
BLUE HILL DISTRICT
GOAL

Walkable redevelopment that helps pay for infrastructure improvements and grows the tax base.
THE OPPORTUNITIES
THE ENVIRONMENT
THE OUTCOMES
2017 | Stormwater Treatment
23% of all units permitted in District
Walkability

Sidewalk

+6,975 ft.

Multi-use Path

+877 ft.
Walkability

Sidewalk

+20%

Multi-use Path

+30%
LEARNING
Public Benefits
Matching Expectations
Regular Communication
Eastland Mall Redevelopment

American Planning Association

December 8, 2017
• History and Site Context
• Redevelopment Process
• Final Thoughts
Eastland Mall

...a bright new day in shopping and entertainment
NOW OPEN!

There is something new under the sun — Eastland! Its two-level, fully-climatized mall brings together a marvelous blend of 90 stores to serve you and your family — including Belk, Macy's and J.C. Penney. But, that's just the beginning. It's a place to enjoy all day long, not only exploring the shops, but discovering such spectacular entertainment as the huge indoor ice rink as well. And there's a new dining experience around every corner. The beautiful courts are green with growing things and offer a genial place to rest or meet a friend.

Eastland is truly the dawn of a new day in central shopping pleasure and convenience. And every inch of it was planned with you in mind.
Grand Opening of Eastland Mall

Mall Remodeled

Suburban retail shift to new malls & power centers

1975

Fourth Anchor Addition

1979

Demographic shift, mall decline

1990

1998

2002

JC Penney closes
Eastland Area Plan adopted by Council recommending mixed-use development and increased bike/ped connectivity

2003

Eastland on mend, Burlington Coat Factory occupies partial former Dillards

2004

Mall shootings and crime escalates

2005

Eastland Transit Facility opens

2006

Belk & Limited closings

2007

ULI Study recommending transformation to mixed-use town center

Dillards becomes Outlet

Harris Teeter closes
Mall goes into receivership

Consultant conducts adaptive reuse strategy

Sears closes

Charlotte EAST establishes Principles for Redevelopment

City enters negotiations with Studio Charlotte; mall demolition approved

City purchases 80 acres of mall property; issues RFP for development proposals to support the film and television production industry

City enters negotiations with Studio Charlotte; mall demolition approved

City enters negotiations with Studio Charlotte; mall demolition approved

City terminates MOU

Partnership discussions about parks, stormwater, civic uses, schools, developers, etc.
Community Redevelopment Principles

• **Enhance the Perceptions of the Eastland Area and East Charlotte**
  Attract visitors from across the region

• **Unify Local Communities**
  Build on the Eastside’s cultural and international diversity

• **Create Connectivity and Walkability for Surrounding Neighborhoods**
  Integrate development into the existing corridors and neighborhoods

• **Take Advantage of Natural Features**
  Restore water features and create dedicated and flexible open spaces

• **Create Opportunity for Civic Development**
  Incorporate public amenities such as a school or library

• **Increase Equitable Economic Development**
  Provide opportunities for businesses, small scale developers, and residents
"Everyone has the right to live in a great place. More importantly, everyone has the right to contribute to making the place where they already live great."

- Fred Kent, President, Project for Public Spaces

- Model for sustainable design
- Civic partnerships (school, park)
- Walkable, mixed use place making
- Integration of existing and future transit
Eastland Concept Plan
Concept Implementation – K-8 School (partial magnet & dual language program)
• Modeled generally after Westminster, CO redevelopment process
  – City taking on role of land developer

• Two-phased approach

• Phase One:
  – **Developer Forum**: Define requirements, identify barriers, and gauge project feasibility/interest
  – **Lean Scan**: Develop approach to encourage small-scale development and community building
  – **Tactical Urbanism Workshop**: Identify additional near-term activities for the site

• Phase Two:
  – Market feasibility analysis
  – Master Plan, Design Guidelines, and Regulatory Framework
  – Cost estimates and site programming
  – Marketing plan and solicitation of potential development partners
• Multiple conversations with 50+ professionals within the development and business community

• Participants included developers (small and large), brokers, architects, small business owners, potential non-profit users, and investors

• Collected feedback and perspectives to uncover barriers to redevelopment (perceived and actual)

• Identified potential opportunities for redevelopment
### Barriers

- Achievable rents are too low to support new construction w/o some type of public support
- Infrastructure needs
- Lack of financially viable plan and no consensus around a path forward
- Destination retail or large office space not viable today or in foreseeable future
- Inconsistent and uncertain regulatory environment (particularly punitive to small-scale development)

### Assets

- City controls land
- Central location with short commute to Uptown
- Local magnet schools have strong reputation:
  - K-8 partial magnet / language immersion school on site is a big asset
- Diverse and entrepreneurial residents
- Stable and strengthening surrounding communities
- Growing momentum in market and improving perceptions
• Site should be divided into manageable pieces or development pods

• Small, incremental development can create authentic destination and could foster larger scale redevelopment interest

• Temporary activation can reconnect people to the site and begin changing perceptions

• Short-term interventions can build sense of momentum; provide opportunities for engagement; introduce new identity to the site; and draw more people to the site
  – Generates greater familiarity and less apprehension with the site
  – Successful early activities can inform incremental redevelopment uses and building types
• Event to gather data and test concepts (“Questionnaire Village”)
  – Past, Present, and Future
  – Activities
  – CIP and Community Letter engagement

• Demonstrated how tactical urbanism can be used as tool for interim activation and long term uses

• Connected community members

• Identified potential tactical urbanism measures to be considered for the site
Incremental Development
Preliminary Recommendations

• Create a financially viable implementation plan to ignite interest and remove uncertainty without constraining creativity or opportunism
  – Operationalize the guiding principals
  – Plan enabling infrastructure links
  – Define potential public investment
  – Establish realistic phasing approach
  – Provide a framework that establishes the street grid, open space plan, and a walkable development

• Strengthen the implementation plan by defining additional appropriate public investment in infrastructure, open space, or related civic amenities

• Issue clear and predictable RFP(s) with provisions and a structure to entice diverse teams or a variety of individual respondents focused on discrete development pods which aggregate to 69 acres

• On to Phase Two….
Adapting the Process

• Council did not approve recommendation to move forward with Phase Two
  – Anxiety from first RFP process
  – Concerns expressed over spending additional funds without greater certainty
  – Must find private partner to increase certainty for a successful outcome

• Momentum from Phase One garnered support and interest from development community
  – Work through Phase Two effort in partnership with development partners

• Currently in discussions on potential partnership opportunities to redevelop the site and achieve the principles for redevelopment established by the community
• Process is important to achieving the desired outcome
  – The market and recession led to original approach and weighed short term gains over long term benefits
    • Should have focused on an informed RFP process rather than leading with a particular industry in mind (especially a “mobile” industry reliant on state-wide incentives)
  – Perception of failure vs success
    • The right process could lead to a “no go” decision…this is not a bad outcome

• Positive and consistent messaging is crucial to long term success
  – Community stakeholders must stand up and be message bearers
  – Negativity breeds negativity

• Don’t be afraid to set high expectations

• Partnerships are a must
  – Recognize and appreciate benefits and concerns from public and private sector perspectives
• Focus on quality outcomes; not saving every dollar possible
  – Not a traditional real estate transaction

• Be willing to say “no” to proposals that don’t align with the community’s interests
  – Something is not necessarily better than nothing

• It is a marathon, not a sprint

• Supporters are great assets, but champions are required for successful implementation

• Process more political than anticipated

• Adapt or fail…
When a mall falters, the question that needs to be asked is not “How can we save the mall?” but “How can we use this opportunity to create a higher-value, more sustainable real estate development that helps build a more livable community?”

The Urban Land Institute’s *Ten Principles for Rethinking the Mall*
Step by Step: Catalyzing Walkable Redevelopment

APA Webinar Presentation
John Richardson, Todd DeLong, Adam Lovelady, Ben Hitchings
December 8, 2017
The Speakers

John Richardson
Operations Manager for Long-Range Planning and Sustainability
Town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Todd DeLong, AICP
Redevelopment Manager
City of Charlotte Economic Development Department

Adam Lovelady
Assistant Professor
UNC School of Government

Ben Hitchings, AICP, CZO
Director of Planning & Development Services
Town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Impediments to Walkable Urbanism
## Foot Traffic Ahead

Ranking Walkable Urbanism in America's Largest Metros • 2016

By Christopher R. Leinberger & Michael Rodriguez
The George Washington University School of Business

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### Walkable Urbanism of the 35 Largest U.S. Metropolitan Regions: Current Ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Metro Area</th>
<th>Walkable Urbanism Score</th>
<th>Total Walkable Urbanism Score</th>
<th>Total Walkable Urbanism Score Percentile</th>
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</tbody>
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*Note: The walkable urbanism score is calculated as the sum of four factors: public transit, walking, biking, and green space. The percentiles are based on the rank among all 35 metropolitan regions.*
2016 Study on Walkable Urbanism

- Studied 30 largest metro areas
- Represent nearly half of national population
- Identified Walkable Urban Places (WalkUPs)
- Compared to Drivable Suburbs
2016 Study on Walkable Urbanism

- Walkable Urbanism gaining market share for office, retail, and multi-family rental
- Due to revitalization of central city and urbanization of the suburbs
- Substantial rent premium – 74% on average
- Most socially equitable
  - Reduced transportation costs
  - Improved access to employment
Planning Tool Box

- Plans
- Codes
- Public investments
The Line-up

John Richardson:
Chapel Hill case study to establish Form Based Code and make transportation infrastructure investments in Blue Hill District.

Todd DeLong, AICP:
Charlotte case study to redevelop the former Eastland Mall.

Adam Lovelady:
Examples and lessons learned from other parts of the country.

Ben Hitchings, AICP, CZO:
Introduction and conclusion.
FINANCE
This park is owned by the Plaza Metropolitan District No. 1
Normal hours of operation: 6:00 AM - 10:00 PM

Welcome to Belmar
This garage is owned by The Plaza Metropolitan District No. 1
For assistance, call 303-742-1555
All policies of the District will be enforced, including prohibitions on a variety of activities such as:

The district is not responsible for any damage to vehicles or loss of personal property.

This garage is owned by The Plaza Metropolitan District No. 1
PERIMETER CID (ATLANTA)
ZONING
Belmar (Lakewood/Denver)
(SUB)URBAN RENEWAL
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https://tinyurl.com/SuburbanSpaces