

**FALLS ROAD AND PEACHTREE STREET
CORRIDOR
LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Table of Contents

I.	Acknowledgements	2
II.	Introduction	3
III.	Existing Conditions	4
	Zoning	4
	Transportation	4
IV.	Historical Features	5
V.	Targeted Areas of Opportunity	6
VI.	Public Input and Feedback	7
	Summary of Comments	7
	Summary of Survey Responses	7
VII.	Proposed Development Opportunities	8
	Rocky Mount Brew Mill	8
	Monk to Mill Trail	9
VIII.	Pending Study	9
IX.	Current Zoning Tool	10
X.	Next Steps	11
	Appendix	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following individuals provided their invaluable time and input in the process of researching, writing, & producing the Falls Road and Peachtree Street Corridor Land Use Plan:

Kenneth A. Graves, Director of Planning & Development

JoSeth Bocook, Senior Planner

Bernetta Smith, Planner

Sandra D. Lynch, Planning Technician

Lora Taylor, Administrative Assistant

Kellianne Davis, Community Development Compliance Specialist

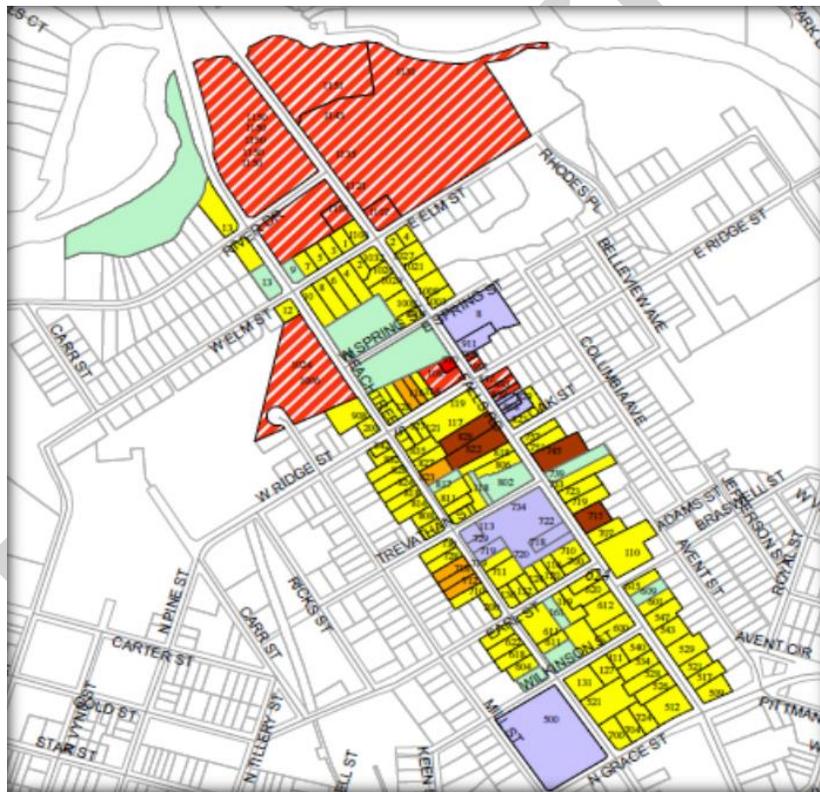
Bob League, Principal Transportation Planner

DRAFT

I. INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Plan was chosen by the City Council for study in the spring of 2015. After the area was chosen, city staff conducted several months of background research and shareholder meetings. The Land Use Plan was developed based on the following objectives to encourage appropriate land development along the major thoroughfare of Falls Road and Peachtree Street to promote a compatible land use pattern and ensure the historical character of the adjacent neighborhoods remain intact.

For purposes of this study, the Falls Road and Peachtree Street corridor generally includes the area between N. Grace Street to the south, Rocky Mount Mill Village to the north, and adjacent parcels along Peachtree Street and Falls Road. This study area is completely within the corporate limits of the City of Rocky Mount. The specific boundaries of the study area are indicated on the Study Area Map below.



Falls Road/Peachtree Street Corridor Study Area Map

Analysis of the area indicates that significant redevelopment will take place within the next three years and possibly more in the future. Capitol Broadcasting has purchased approximately eighty percent (80%) of the Mill Village area. Capitol desires to redevelop the mill similar to their development project in Downtown Durham which created the American Tobacco Campus. The vision for the Mill Village is to create a community with single family, multi-family, retail, restaurants, office and brewmill components.

The Land Use Plan attempts to identify exactly which zoning tools may be utilized by property owners to collaborate with proposed development and possible road enhancements.

In addition, the Engineering Department is conducting a corridor study to address traffic issues in the study area. Also, the City is trying to secure funding to design and implement a pedestrian trail from Monk Park to the Mill Village (Monk to Mill). This proposed feature will run parallel to the study area. (See Appendix A)

It is the City's overall desire to encourage a walkable, pedestrian friendly environment in the area.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING LAND USES AND OTHER FEATURES OF THE STUDY AREA

A. ZONING DISTRICTS

The "Existing Zoning" map (see Appendix A), depicts the location and the extent of the current zoning classifications within the study area. There are six zoning districts in the study area: B-1 (Neighborhood Commercial District); B-2 (Commercial Corridor District); B-2CU (Commercial Corridor Conditional Use District); R-10 (Low Density Residential District); R-6MFA (Multifamily Residential District); R-6MFACU (Multifamily Residential Conditional Use District).

The two largest zoning districts in the study area, based on acreage are R-10 and R-6MFA. The R-10 zone is located primarily in the southeastern portion of the study area along Falls Road and Peachtree Street. The R-6MFA district is located in the northern, southern, eastern and western portion of the study area.

The B-2 zoned areas are located in the northern part of the study area.

B. TRANSPORTATION CAPACITY

Falls Road is a one-way arterial street from downtown, which is paired with Peachtree Street. Falls Road has a practical capacity of approximately 10,000 vehicles per day (vpd). The estimated traffic volume on Falls Road in 2013 was 4,500 vpd. The Falls Road corridor consist of two travel lanes (35 mph), curb and gutter, parking, and sidewalk.

Peachtree Street is a one-way arterial street into downtown, which is paired with Falls Road. Peachtree Street has a practical capacity of approximately 12,000 vpd. The estimated traffic volume on Peachtree Street in 2013 was 6,000 vpd. The Peachtree Street corridor consist of two travel lanes (35 mph), curb and gutter, parking, and sidewalk.

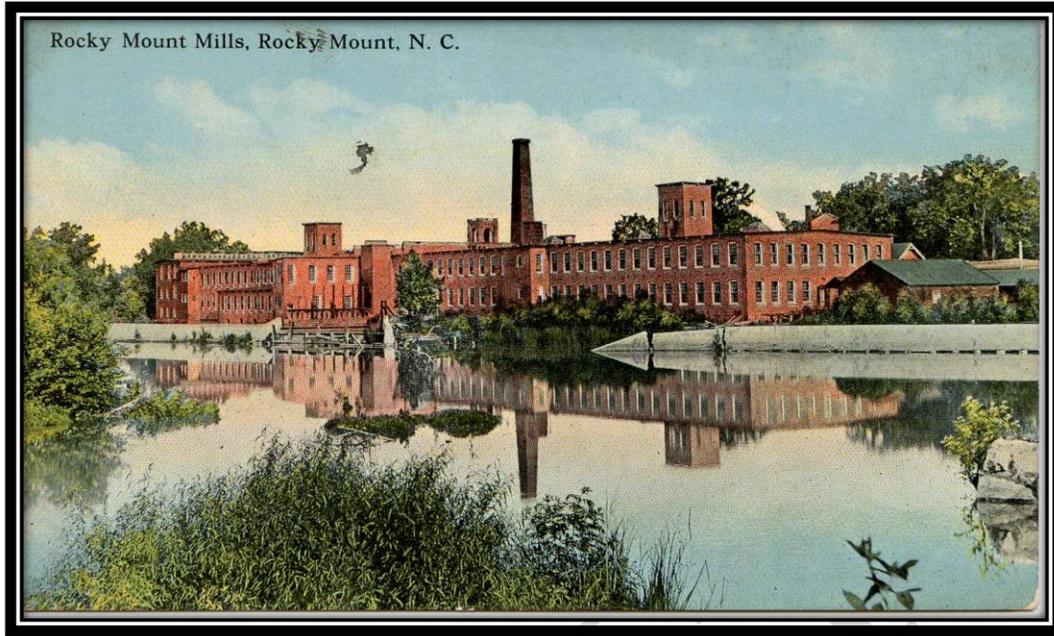
III. HISTORICAL FEATURES

The Falls Road and Peachtree Street corridor is home to two National Register Historic Districts.

The **Falls Road Historic District**, a remarkably well-preserved residential district containing one-hundred historic buildings, primarily houses, developed beginning in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to 1950 grew northwestward from downtown Rocky Mount and is associated with many important tobaccoists, businessmen, and physicians in Rocky Mount's history. Rocky Mount experienced a burst of construction from the late 1890s into 1920s generated by the establishment of the Rocky Mount Tobacco Market and the Atlantic Coast Line's repair shops. Like other main streets adjacent to downtown, stylish houses were built along Falls Road in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Falls Road, essentially an extension of Main Street, experienced resurgence in development during the 1920s as large brick homes were built for doctors associated with Park View Hospital, which opened on Falls Road in 1914.

The residences of the Falls Road neighborhood reflect building practices in Rocky Mount from 1900 to 1950, when local architects and builders supplied nationally popular house designs to their clients (See Appendix B). Contractors such as D. J. Rose, Sam Toler and architects, John C. Stout and Thomas Herman, built solid stylish houses along Falls Road, often from architects' plans. The district exemplifies popular architectural styles of the period, including the Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Neoclassical Revival, Georgian Revival and Craftsman styles. A small scattering of houses built in the early 1900s stand as a reminder of Rocky Mount's early boom of residential development. Several brick Colonial and Georgian Revival style homes represent the 1920s expansion of the neighborhood.

The **Rocky Mount Mills Village Historic District** is a largely intact mill village that straddles Falls Road, just south of the Tar River. In addition to being a National Historic District, the Rocky Mount Mills Village is also a Local Historic District. Built between 1835 and 1948, the historic structures that make up the district comprise a historic mill and mill village associated with the second oldest cotton mill in North Carolina. Encompassing six blocks, the district consists of industrial and residential resources, from the antebellum, post-bellum, and twentieth century development of Rocky Mount Mills. Located on approximately 98 acres and irregular in shape, the district is roughly bounded by the south side of the Tar River to the north, Spring Street to the south, and Columbia Avenue and Carr Street to the east and west, respectively.



The Rocky Mount Mills Village Historic District contains seventy-four contributing principal resources; made up of eight industrial buildings and two dwellings located in the 1100 block of Falls Road, and sixty-four mill houses located on River Drive, Falls Road, Carr Street, Elm Street, and Spring Street.

IV. TARGETED AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

In 2015 the City conducted and adopted a Comprehensive Housing Study. Per the “Crossroads to Prosperity” Housing Study the land use subject area is located in the Mill Village Neighborhood. In the Housing Study, fourteen neighborhoods within the City limits are identified as Targeted Areas of Opportunity (TAOs). TAOs are areas of high vacancy, blight and hold older housing stock. These factors are exhibited in the Falls Road/Peachtree Street study area. However, with the acquisitions and vision of Capitol Broadcasting’s infill mix use development will spur revitalization of the Falls Road/Peachtree Street corridors.

Targeted Areas of Opportunity						
Around the Y	Down East	Germantown	Hillsdale	Lincoln Park	Mill Village	Southeast Rocky Mount
Central City	Duke Circle	Happy Hill	Holly Street	Little Raleigh	South Rocky Mount	Villa Place

V. PUBLIC INPUT AND FEEDBACK

The Department of Planning and Development held a public meeting and a feedback gathering for discussion of the Falls Road and Peachtree Street Corridor study (See Appendix D). On April 30, 2015 approximately twenty-five residents and property owners from the study area attended the public input meeting in which the Director of Planning and Development and the Director of Engineering explained the land uses, zoning districts, current traffic study and construction developments related to the area. The public was encouraged to ask questions and express any concerns for the area. A survey was given to each attendee inquiring as to the main points of interest in their respective neighborhood, area concerns, recommendations and actions (See Appendix E). On July 16, 2015 a follow-up meeting was held to provide residents and property owners the opportunity to see the proposed plans for the Rocky Mount Brew Mill and Monk to Mill Trail. Posters with summarized notes from the April meeting, maps and historic district FAQs were also on display.

A. Summary of Public Comments

The most common concern expressed was the issue of speeding on Falls Road and Peachtree Street. Many residents asked about having increased police patrol for the speeders and the noise levels of vehicles coming through the residential area. There is an unease among many area residents for the development of the Brew Mill taverns and tap houses due to worries about alcohol consumption and drivers on the roads. Residents and property owners expressed the need for crime control and the notion of Rocky Mount being a crime ridden area as it deters visitors and business growth. Several comments and questions were asked regarding the increase of property taxes with the development and increased number of businesses. Many owners commented on the need for renovations and upkeep to the historical homes and preserving character of the area. Along with the requested improvements for traffic safety, residents were highly interested in pedestrian friendly sidewalks and bike lanes along the corridor.

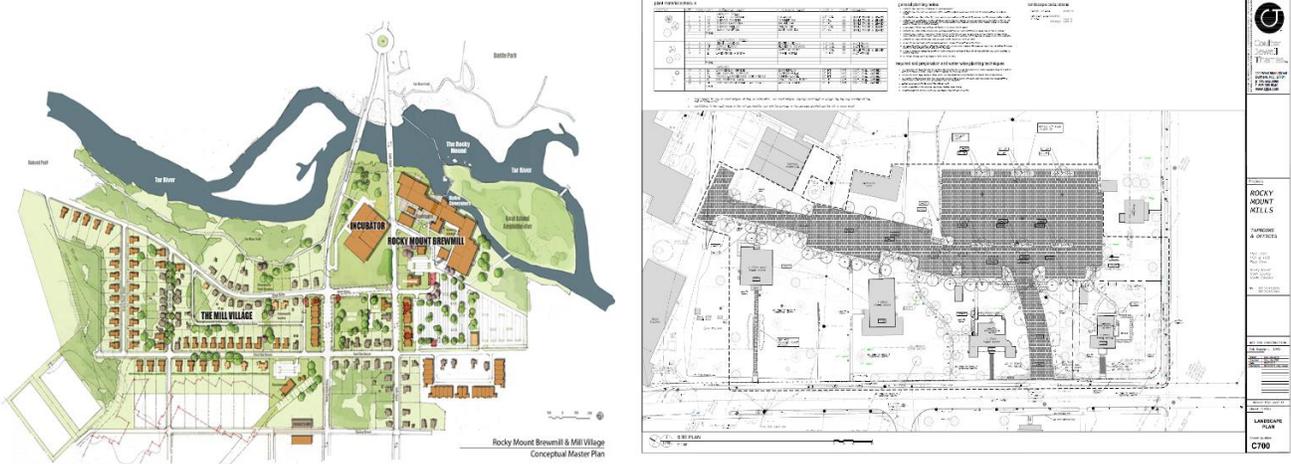
B. Summary of Survey Responses

The average number of year's residents have lived at or owned their property is 24 years. The Historical elements of the area is what is most liked by residents and property owners. The area is also liked for being conveniently located and easily accessible to downtown and shopping. The improvements requested are to add pedestrian convenience and make repairs to sidewalks, provide street lighting, and reduce the speeding and noise levels of traffic in the area. Other improvements noted were to encourage home renovations, supporting Mill development with the addition of stores and professional offices, and expanding the farmer's market. Land uses and development not wanted in the area were pawn shops, adult or child daycares, commercial businesses, and convenience/grocery stores. Keeping Falls and Peachtree as one-way streets was requested by many residents. Issues requested to be addressed for the area were crime, speeding, noise control, trash on streets, drug enforcement, better pedestrian accessibility and safety. A request was also noted to have Trevathan Street converted to two-way lanes. Bicycle and running trails for the area were requested. Enhancing the historical values by not destroying buildings in the area was also requested. A thank you note was made to Capitol Broadcasting and the City for the visioning of the future for the area.

VI. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A. Rocky Mount Mill

The Rocky Mount Mill is undergoing an exciting transformation courtesy of Capitol Broadcast Company who envision the mill and Mill Village as a craft-brewing incubator. Capitol hopes to attract a group of beer artisans who would not only work in microbreweries inside the former textile mill, but live in the renovated Mill Village houses as well.



Breweries in Asheville, the Triad, and the Triangle have made names for themselves among beer aficionados, and Rocky Mount is lining up for a piece of their own success in the microbrew industry. Benefits of the coming brew mill include the creation of jobs and tax base growth, as well as the attraction of more tourists and entrepreneurs to the area.



The first brewery of the brew mill opened in the Fall of 2015 with a second opening April 2016, and the grand opening of the entire brew mill is anticipated for Summer 2016.



Currently, there is no designated walking trail from the Mill Village to downtown, which is a missed opportunity for visitors to the Rocky Mount Mills, a craft brewing fan's destination, to easily commute to other area attractions downtown.

B. Monk to Mill Trail

The Monk to Mill Greenway trail between Rocky Mount Mill and Main Street will provide an off-road bicycle and pedestrian connection between Rocky Mount Mill and Downtown through re-activation of the railroad spur right-of-way that served industries such as Rocky Mount Mills, New Southern Cottonseed Oil, Rocky Mount Lumber Company, China America Tobacco and Imperial Tobacco from the 1890's through the 1990's.

From Main Street to Monk Park, located at the southern end of Washington Street, the trail will be developed as an "Urban Trail" with signage and various bicycle and pedestrian enhancements along Washington Street to improve safety and tell the story of Rocky Mount's history. (See Appendix A)

VII. TRAFFIC STUDY

Traffic issues are one of the most pressing concerns from residents. Currently, the Engineering Department is conducting a Corridor Study to address traffic issues. Several enhancements are being considered: a round-a-bout, bike/pedestrian lanes, speed limit reduction, and reduction in the number of vehicle lanes.

Round-a-bouts can improve traffic flow by safely separating pedestrians and cyclists from vehicular traffic. Round-a-bouts can also reduce left turn vehicle movements which can help reduce conflicts and improve the flow of traffic.

Reduced vehicular speed on streets improves safety for all users. Accidents are less likely to occur at lower speeds, and when they do occur they are less serious. Based on North Carolina Department of Transportation data, lower speed collisions between vehicles and pedestrians or cyclists are also much less likely to result in a fatality.

The City anticipates having the Corridor Study completed by Spring 2016.

VIII. CURRENT ZONING TOOL

Overwhelmingly, the feedback staff received from property owners was to preserve the historical character of the community and to improve the traffic conditions. As mentioned earlier, the engineering staff is in the process of addressing the traffic issues. The purpose of the Land Use Study is to identify and recommend possible land use opportunities. The landscape of the study area is changing mainly due to the investment Capitol Broadcasting has initiated with the purchase of the Mill Village. The private revitalization of the Rocky Mount Mill can provide other opportunities for property owners in the area to redevelop their houses in unique ways. After careful review of the existing land uses and the current ordinance one zoning tool has been underutilized in the city.



The Land Development Code (LDC) section 506-Historial Preservation Commercial Use offers flexible land uses within a historical neighborhood. In order to be considered for such flexibility the LDC states the property must be either nominated for, or listed on, the National Register of Historic Places or included in the “study list”, or other document identifying properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, compiled by the Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. In addition, any allowed commercial use operated under this provision must be operated within the building or buildings on the aforementioned designated listing. A final approval for a property owner must be granted by the City Council with an issuance of a Special Use permit.

While the historic commercial use could provide property owners some flexibility, some modifications to this provision need to be updated.

IX. NEXT STEPS

With the impending traffic study under way there is some uncertainty with making definitive recommendations. If the vision and implementation is to make the study area more walkable, home occupation and some commercial use could be established in the neighborhoods without being a detriment to historical character of the homes. Parking would be a factor for businesses to succeed. This could be resolved with designated parking pockets and/or shared parking service agreements among entities in the area. In addition, the permitted land uses for the "Historical Preservation Commercial Use" need to be revised and updated. Staff recommends the following revisions to the Historic Preservation Commercial Use provisions:

- a. Parking: Layout of adequate parking spaces to meet the standard O-I off-street parking requirements.
- b. [Lighting.] All parking areas must be lighted.
- c. Other requirements:
 - 1) In order to be considered for the issuance of a special use permit, the site must be either nominated for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places or included in the "study list," or other document identifying properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, compiled by the Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.
 - 2) Any allowed commercial use operated under a historic preservation special use permit must be operated within the building or buildings which are listed on or nominated for the National Register of Historic Places or the "study list," or other document identifying properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, compiled by the Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, and may only be open during days and daily hours as approved by the city council. In the determination of the days and daily hours of operation, the city council shall consider, but not be limited to consideration of, the following determining factors: potential of the subject site to support the proposed activity, traffic patterns and volumes, and impact of proposed use on surrounding land uses.
 - ~~3) [Except within the central city area as provided in subsection 6) below,] the commercial use may not occupy in excess of twenty-five (25) percent of the gross floor area of the building in which it is located, except when the commercial use is considered a part of the historical significance of the building.~~
 - 4) Only the following uses will be allowed: ~~Art gallery; auction sales; baking;~~ **bed and breakfast;** ~~on-premises and retail only; blacksmith services; club or lodge; contractor, trades (excluding storage of equipment for supplies); curio and souvenir sales, including antique sales; gunsmith;~~ eating or drinking facilities/**restaurant** (drive-ins excluded); **grocery/food sales;** **health club/spa;** **office;** recreational amusement conducted inside a building and for profit, and not otherwise listed herein; **retailing;** school, trade or vocational; ~~tailoring; wedding consultant and accessory sales and rental.~~ As a prerequisite to the establishment and

continued operation of eating or drinking facilities (drive-ins excluded), there shall be no noxious odors emitted from the facility as determined by the city council.

~~5) Sign—One (1) non-lighted business identification sign having a maximum height of ten (10) feet, and a maximum area of four (4) square feet in R-15, R-10, R-8 and R-6 zones; eight (8) square feet in R-6MFA, O-1, MA and A-1 zones; and twelve (12) square feet in B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, B-5, I-1, I-2 and IP zones.~~

6) The commercial use may occupy up to one hundred (100) percent of the gross floor area of the building in which it is located, provided such building is within the central city area and has met the other criteria set forth above and in paragraphs 1), 2), 4) and 5) above as well as the parking standards and other applicable standards of the City Code. In addition, the board of adjustment shall approve, as a condition of approval of said permit, a certified architect's rendering of the front, rear, right, and left facade elevations to insure that any exterior renovation will not destroy or detrimentally alter the historic or architectural integrity of said building facade. The board of adjustment shall utilize such expertise as it deems necessary in making such a determination. Examples of such expertise would include, but are not limited to, a representative of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, the Nash County or Edgecombe County historical societies, or a qualified architectural historian.

DRAFT