

Boundary Street Master Plan & Code

Beaufort, SC

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Area:	Approx. 1.5 miles
Client:	City of Beaufort Beaufort County
Year Adopted:	2006
Website:	cityofbeaufort.org

For more information, visit doverkohl.com.



Existing Conditions: The blank walls of Jean Ribaut Square front Boundary Street.



End Result: Overhead utility wires are removed; the street geometry is reconfigured to accommodate a center median green strip, sidewalk, and frontage road with parallel parking on the north side. Street trees and landscaping are added while Jean Ribaut Square adds vibrant, mixed-use buildings to address the street. New buildings and street trees also create a walkable environment along the north side of Boundary Street.



The new City Hall at the intersection of Boundary Street and Ribaut Road can become a formal entrance to Beaufort.



The Project

Boundary Street is the entrance to the city of Beaufort. As a typical commercial strip corridor, it does not enhance Beaufort's overall character and charm but rather serves as a poor gateway to the historic city. A comprehensive strategy for growth and redevelopment of the corridor seeks to improve the safety and operational efficiency for all modes of travel while creating a more economically productive address. Helping with this plan were consultants Sottile & Sottile, Hall Planning & Engineering, Seamon, Whiteside & Associates, MACTEC, and UrbanAdvantage.

The Process

"Designing in public," the team of planners, engineers, architects and economists conducted an open planning process in September 2005 to identify the ideas, needs and concerns of the community; over 300 residents and stakeholders participated.

Plan Principles

Transformation of the corridor will not happen overnight, so the Plan is designed to be broken down into small components that can be redeveloped as the market demands. However, plan principles create a cohesiveness that guides each phase of development, and integrated concepts ensure that growth of the corridor is consistent in terms of design and sustainability. The Plan addresses opportunities for waterfront redevelopment and provides a scenic drive to run along Albergotti Creek, adding marsh views and a more complete street network north of Boundary Street. A continuous marshfront park should also be created along Battery Creek to help establish a green network. Other features include the addition of roundabouts at the intersections with Ribaut Road and Robert Smalls Parkway, which will improve traffic flow and safety at these special intersections, and a parallel road network along Boundary Street will integrate multiple options for travel and disperse everyday trips. Lastly, new civic buildings should be added in prominent positions along the corridor, while strategic infill along vacant parcels will provide a variety of housing types and mix of uses and also help increase the tax base. Meanwhile, street trees and proper sidewalks along existing and new streets create desirable addresses and enhance the pedestrian environment.

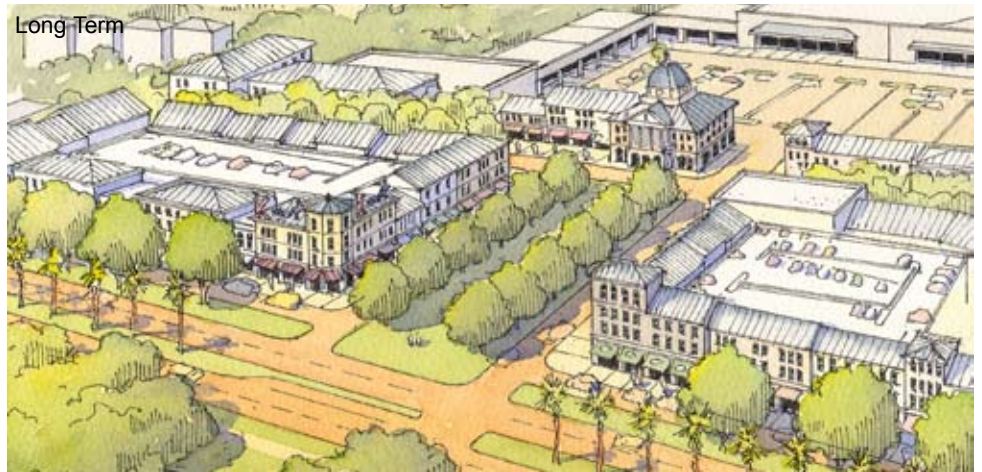
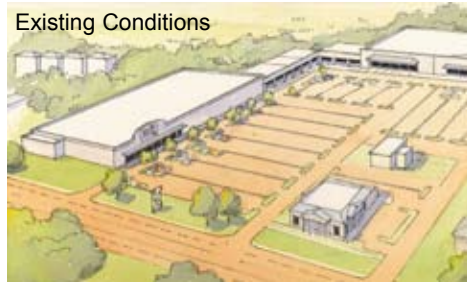
Status

The Boundary Street Master Plan was adopted as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan on August 28, 2006. A form-based code, the Boundary Street Redevelopment District Code, was created for the corridor to stimulate redevelopment and to ensure the proper implementation of the Plan. The Code was adopted by City Council on February 6, 2007. The first redevelopment projects are underway and the City and County are working together on the initial street improvements.

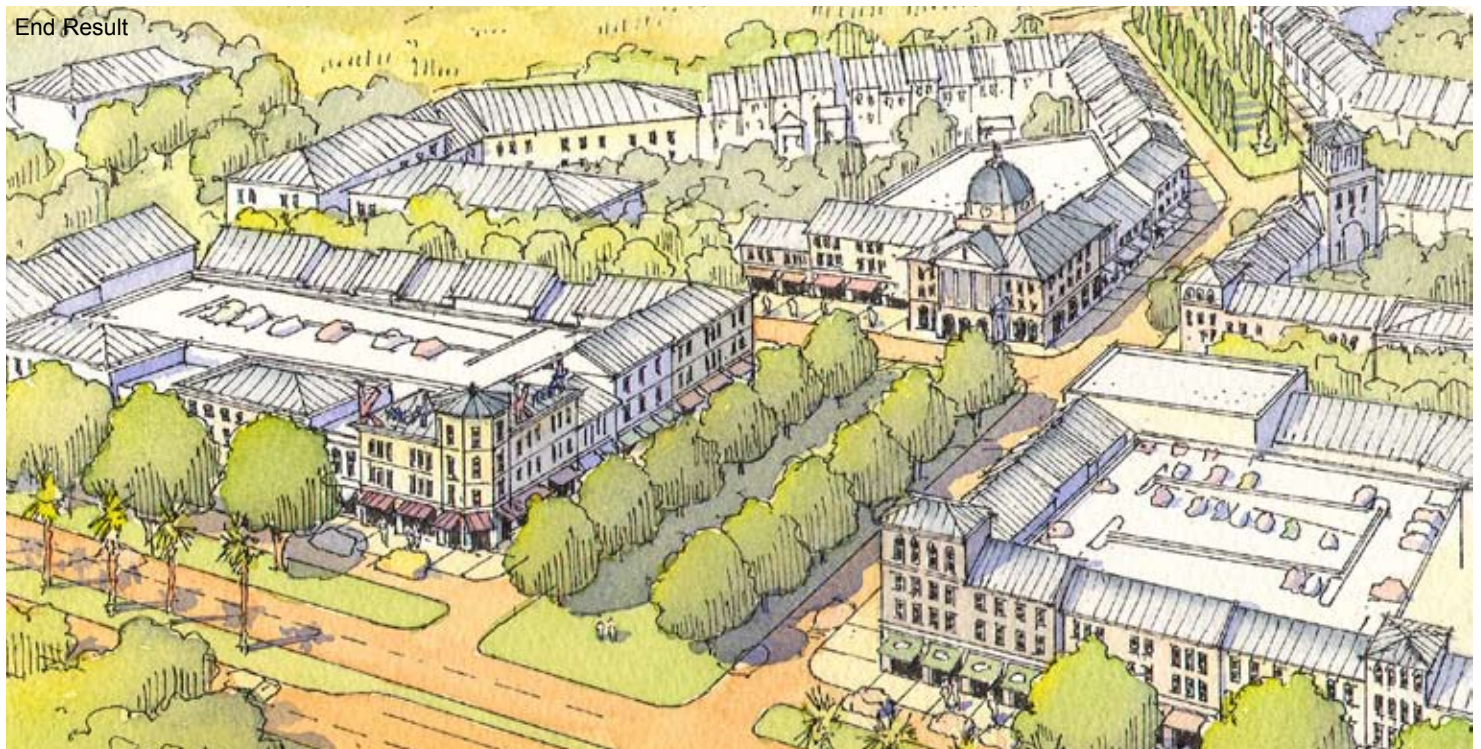
Redevelopment of Jean Ribaut Square

Converting strip shopping centers into mixed-use centers creates economically viable projects that can be phased in over time. With the addition of office, retail, residential and open spaces, this undervalued real estate can experience far greater economic returns. Not only is a stronger sense of place established but the amount of time the land is in use is increased throughout the day, helping to create a vibrant and more valuable mixed-use center of streets and blocks.

Jean Ribaut Square, located at a central location along Boundary Street, provided a similar economic opportunity for Beaufort as well as an exciting design challenge. This "L-shaped" strip shopping center, which includes a Kmart, Bi-Lo grocery, Stein Mart and other smaller eating and retail establishments, has the potential to become a far more profitable mixed-use center. The obstacles lie with the existing leases on the site and its location at one of the narrowest places along the corridor. To accommodate the community's desire for a parallel road network north of Boundary Street, while also working within the confines of the surrounding marshes, this new road would need to bisect the Kmart building in its present location. The goal is for the City, County, and property owner to work together so that construction of the road network, which is essential to the revitalization of the corridor, can be realized, and Jean Ribaut Square can become an integral piece of town.



A block and street network with a central town green, a grand civic building, and a frontage road along the north side of Boundary Street are added during initial improvements (above right), while long-term plans include a new parallel road that bisects the existing Kmart building and provides for an additional east - west connection north of Boundary Street.



Jean Ribaut Square is fully transformed into a functioning piece of town as infill redevelopment continues on incremental parcels. A new main street is formed perpendicular to Boundary Street with multi-story buildings fronting onto the green and parking accommodated on-street and in mid-block parking locations.