

Midtown Plan

Lynchburg, VA



The plan for Midtown Lynchburg is a synthesis of six “Character Areas”, each with its own distinct attributes and special qualities. The areas are organized as Village Centers, Neighborhood Conservation, Neighborhood Infill & Redevelopment, Medical Arts District, Business & Industry, and Green Network. The character areas combine to form a cohesive vision that will guide growth in Midtown Lynchburg for generations to come.

Transforming Midtown



Lynchburg citizens and stakeholders remained involved throughout the charrette process.

Designing in Public

Community involvement was an essential component in creating a workable vision and plan for the future of Midtown. Participants helped to create the Midtown Plan through an intensive design event called a charrette. Over 500 interested residents and stakeholders participated in the planning process, including property owners, neighbors, business people, developers, elected officials, appointed officials, City staff, students, and community leaders.



The existing conditions on Lakeside Drive do not provide a pedestrian-friendly environment. The Plaza buildings turn their backs to the street and their loading docks detract from the beautiful views of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the distance.



Short-term Improvements: Lakeside Drive is widened to accommodate on-street parking. A brick safety zone in the middle would be utilized by ambulances making their way to Lynchburg General Hospital. Street trees and a new sidewalk are added. A new fence is constructed along the E.C. Glass High School property.



Long-term Improvements: New buildings are built close to the street on the Plaza site. Doors and windows on the street provide visual interest for pedestrians and activate the public realm. Pedestrians and motorists alike are now greeted with a focused view of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Corridors of Confidence

While Lakeside Drive, Langhorne Road, and Park Avenue represent three of the primary streets in Midtown Lynchburg, there is little visual indication of their importance. The borders between public and private space are ill-defined, and a number of properties are in disrepair or are vacant lots. This has resulted in a negative image of Midtown for those who travel these streets on their way to the hospital or points beyond. Plans have been proposed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to redesign these streets as a part of the Crosstown Connector. Citizens and city officials expressed concern over the physical appearance of VDOT's redesigned streets.

In response to these concerns, the design team produced alternative design concepts at several key locations. In each case, an equal amount of attention was paid to the design of the public and private realms, revealing how these streets can become a "Corridor of Confidence" for Midtown.

CORNERSTONES OF THE PLAN

I. NEIGHBORHOODS

II. GREAT STREETS

III. PRESERVE AND CONNECT

IV. START NOW, TOGETHER

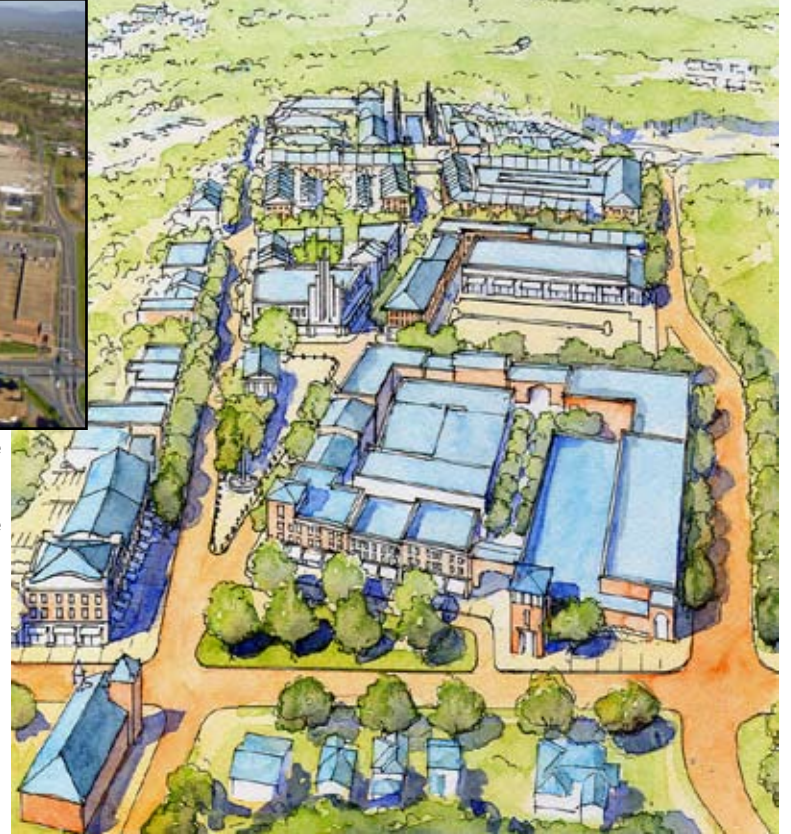
The Plaza

In 1960 Pittman Plaza opened as a major retail shopping center. Located on the site of the former Miller Home for Girls, the opening of Pittman Plaza marked the move from downtown commerce to suburban retail. In 1980 with the opening of River Ridge Mall, the Plaza began to decline. While many Lynchburg residents have fond memories of visits to the Plaza, the shopping center property today is in need of a dramatic renaissance.

The plan for Midtown includes a conceptual redevelopment vision for the Plaza. The detailed plan for the Plaza shows the location of new blocks, streets, and parking facilities. The single use retail center should be replaced with a new mixed-use neighborhood. A variety of housing options should be included in the plan, such as mid-rise apartments, rowhouses, and condominiums.



Above: Aerial view of the Plaza, existing conditions.



Right: Aerial view of the Plaza, after proposed redevelopment.



Left – Existing Conditions: Corner of Wadsworth and Memorial Avenue
Below – Long Term Improvements: Utility lines are placed underground and street trees and on-street parking are added to Memorial Avenue. Mixed-use buildings complete a new Village Square. The new Square provides a gathering place for residents and is faced by focal buildings including Park View United Methodist Church and Lynchburg Public Library.



“(The Midtown Plan) is something that reflects the wishes, desires, and values of our community.”

– Kimball Payne, City Manager

Midtown Plan

Location: Lynchburg, Virginia

Project Area: Approximately 1400 acres

Client: City of Lynchburg

Charrette Team: Victor Dover
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Chris Podstawski

Consultants: Craddock Cunningham
Architectural Partnership
architecture and planning

Hall Planning & Engineering
transportation planning

UrbanAdvisors
preliminary market analysis

UrbanAdvantage
computer visualizations

Status:

The Midtown Plan was adopted by City Council in October 2005 and the first redevelopment projects are currently underway.

Langhorne Road Redevelopment



Langhorne Road is one of the primary routes to Lynchburg General Hospital. Today, gaps in the street wall and poorly maintained properties are located along this route.



An inviting streetscape has been created by adding street trees and defined parking lanes, and removing overhead power lines. Buildings are situated close to the street and a new focal building terminates the view.

Reconnecting Lynchburg College

The College is growing and the creation of a village center along Lakeside Drive would provide a better entrance to Lynchburg College. The proposed “College Corner” should be a place where students, faculty, and Midtown residents alike can reach by foot and shop and eat.



Existing conditions of Lakeside Drive.



Proposed Village Center on Lakeside Drive near the entrance to Lynchburg College.

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